

Sunbird

TIME

Produced by Chris Hall for Sunbird Yachts

THE SHOW STOPPIN' SUNBIRD

The greatest crowd stopper at both Melbourne and Sydney boat shows, must have been the Sunbird Motor Sailer. From the moment it arrived at both shows, it was an instant success. So much so that we had a lot of trouble getting aboard for a good look. You

could not see the boat for people.

Recently, we overcame this by arranging with Newport Boat Sales on Sydney's Pittwater, to take one out and put it through its paces. The standard Sunbird 25 is one of the bigger trailer yachts that people claimed was too big for trailing but now its size has been accepted along with more recently designed trailer yachts which have grown to 28 ft. in length.

The increasing popularity of trailer yachts has fired the enthusiasm of many who found dinghies too demanding and large keel yachts too expensive. Now they have crafts that have all the comforts of an ocean going yacht at the price they can afford. As a result, many of these newcomers are young families who want safety for their children and the fun of sailing without the need for constant deep concentration.

Some of these families have come from powerboats and, although often competent seamen, sailing is quite new to them. They want a basic sailing boat that is easy to handle but still hanker for the big engine that they are used to. The Sunbird 25 Motor Sailer was designed to fill these requirements and it does so extremely well.

The hull is identical with the standard model, as is the foredeck and cabin right back to the after bulkhead. From there on, things are very different.

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BOATS

Sun Bird 25 Motor Sailer

Melbourne builder Chris Hall, who established new, high standards of finish in fibreglass yachts with his Sunmak 20 trailer-sailer and its bigger follow-on, the Sun Bird 25, has successfully explored the motor-sailer theme.

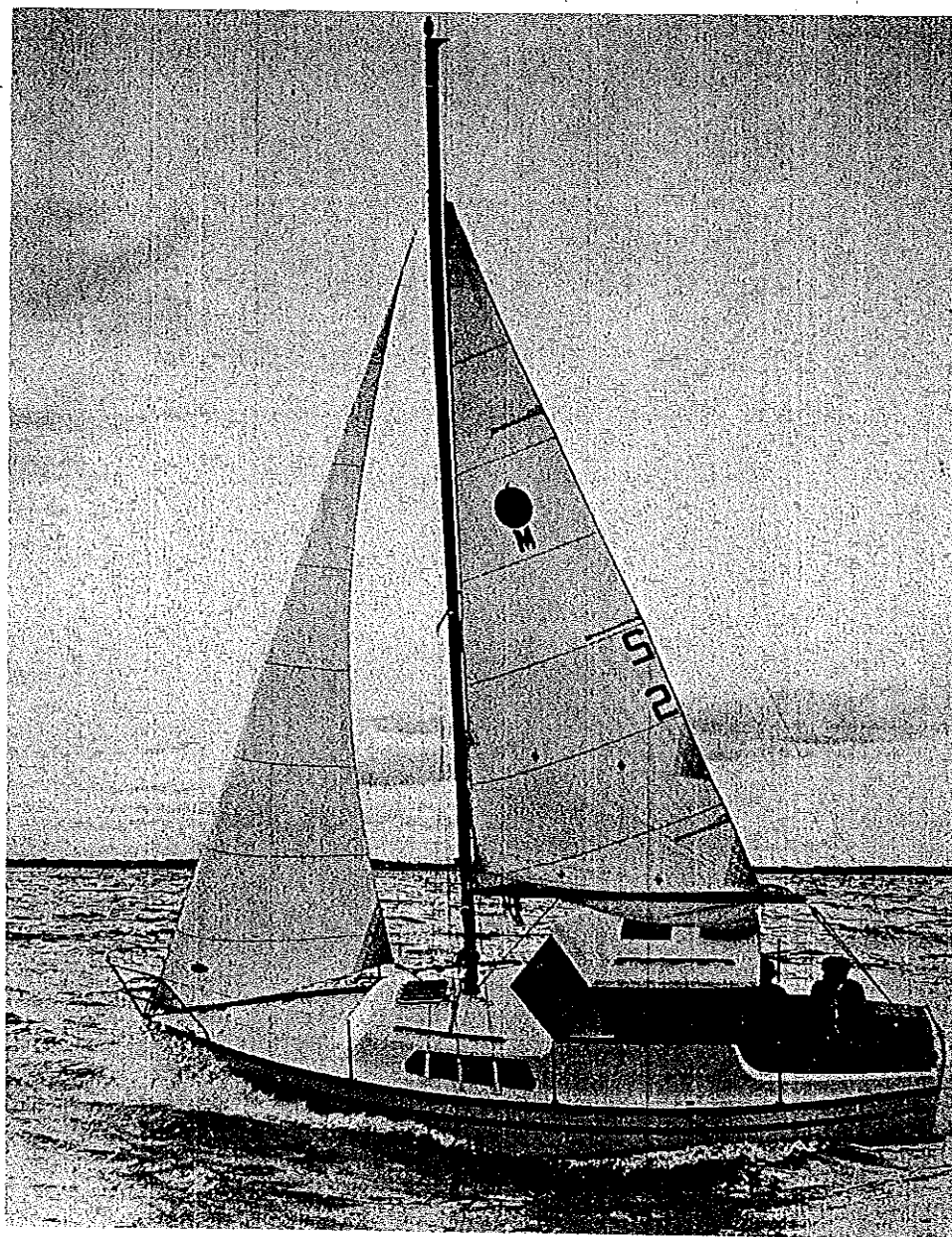
His Sun Bird 25 motor sailer simply adapts the hull of the pure sailing version by utilising a long, shallow ballast keel and a three-bladed propeller in an aperture between the keel and the rudder. The beamy shallow hull form is an efficient motoring shape. A centreplate drops through the keel to improve windward sailing efficiency.

The boat is enormously roomy both down below, where there is 5 ft. 10 in. headroom, and in the doghouse, enclosed by windows, which has 5 ft. 4 in. headroom.

The galley sensibly located close to the open air in the doghouse, to starboard, in a moulded fibreglass unit that includes a recess for the stove, fridge, sink and cupboards. The checker-board pattern wooden cutting board lid provided as standard.

The moulded-fibreglass helmsman's pedestal seat has a stowage bin. Other stowage is available in

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BIRDS OF PASSAGE

Five Sun Bird 25 trailer yachts successfully completed a 427-mile criss-cross cruise of Bass Strait. Right from the beginning, the owners and crews of the five Sun Bird 25's planning a Bass Strait crossing, visiting the Ken and Furneaux groups on the way, agreed that the emphasis would be on safety and setting sensible daily objectives.

Each boat was equipped with marine CB radio and one with single side band to keep in contact with Melbourne and Hobart radios. We carried such necessary items as life jackets, flares, safety harnesses, first aid kits, spare fuel and ground tackle.

We set about provisioning with the thought that it would be seven or eight days before we would be able to replenish supplies of food, water and fuel. Fortunately the Sun Bird is equipped with a fridge/free box designed to use ice as the basic coolant supplemented by running the refrigeration for about two hours a day.

quickly went for the second as the wind climbed to 35 knots.

We had cleared Westernport channel and with the wind still freshening decided to make for the cover of Entrance Point and wait out the blow. Entrance Point is a shallow, poor anchorage, offering the bare minimum of protection even right in close. So with the tide falling in our already-shallow location, lunch consumed and the breeze having steadied to around 30 knots, we changed down to no.3 jib and headed off due south against the wind, which by now was from the southwest.

Although the sea was lumpy, with



We began to wonder whether it would all fit — canned food, dried food, extra water (eight gallons in 2-gal. plastic containers supplementing the 20 gal. tank), fish trap, fishing lines, foulweather gear, charts, etc., etc. But our worries disappeared as we began to pack. The "Bird" had ample locker space to hold our mountain of supplies.

To maintain our battery power, we knew we would have to run our motor for about two hours a day. So how much fuel would be needed? Sun Birds are fitted with a single-cylinder Volvo diesel which is extremely economical. Our tank held 12 gallons, about 25 hours running. We decided to take an extra five gallons in a Jerry can stowed on deck, just in case.

Our party assembled at Port Welshpool on February 9. First to arrive were Tom and Shirley Delaney who were to lead our group. They had sailed to Port Welshpool from their home at Flinders Island in Westernport Bay. Tom, a former professional fisherman, had spent a lot of time working in the waters of the Furneaux group and the east coast of Tasmania. We were to be grateful on many occasions for both his local knowledge and fisherman's "nose" for the weather. His presence gave us a feeling of security.

Next day, departure day, dawned fine with a mild north-westerly wind. We motored to the 4 channel marker, hoisted full main and no.2 headsail and reached off southward with the wind freshening. As the wind gusted to 28 knots, we took in the first slab in the main and



plenty of flying spray, the Sun Birds behaved beautifully, logging a constant six knots to windward. About four miles from Refuge, the breeze dropped away completely, leaving us to motor into the breathtakingly beautiful Refuge Cove. There were many boats in Refuge, among them game fishermen sheltering from the blow to a timber ketch from the Pacific Islands enjoying the beautiful anchorage.

Melbourne Radio passed on a forecast of south to south-westerly winds to 20 knots for the second and longest leg of our trip, the 49-mile passage to the Kent group of islands. Day dawned fine but overcast as we up-anchored and motored southeast into the light swell. There wasn't a breath of wind until about 9 a.m. so we motored, charging our batteries and enjoying the panorama of Wilson's Promontory, Rodondo and the Monocoeur Islands. As predicted, the wind came in from the south-west and we revelled in the broad reach to the Kent Group. Most of the Sun Birds set spinnakers when abreast of Hogan Island and sailed at speeds of up to 9.4 knots for the last 20 miles of the passage.

We sailed into West Cove on Erith Island in bright sunshine. And as we anchored, we were greeted by girls who swam out clad only in sun tan.

West Cove lies on the west side of Murray Pass which separates the three main islands of the Kent Group. The sandy beach is incredibly clean and white. One can clearly see the bottom in 30 ft. of water.

The annual Erith Island Ball was held the night we arrived — by the colony of young people known as the "Erith Mob" who regularly take up residence on Erith during February each year. The Erith Ball turned out to be a barbecue on the beach with a talent quest afterwards — a fun night for all.

But around midnight, the wind had freshened and backed to the south, causing one of our boats to drag its anchor with almost dire consequences. We hastily returned to our boats, up-anchored and followed Tom Delaney to Garden Cove, a more protected anchorage, for what was left of the night.



Forecasts for the third day of our voyage were again south to south-west at 20 knots, so we set sail for West Sister Island off the northern tip of Flinders Island. Sailing conditions were fabulous. Under full main and number 2 we were making around 7 knots, in bright sunshine. As the conditions were perfect and the wind veered more westerly, we decided the change our destination to Killis Crankle Bay on the north-west coast of Flinders Island.

Killis Crankle proved to be a delightful spot — a wide, sweeping beach beneath towering granite outcrops with an anchorage sheltered behind a natural rocky inlet in the southwestern corner of the bay. It houses a small fishing fleet of four or five boats and after some negotiations with the fishermen we spent the evening enjoying a succulent cray (each), a chat and a beer around a beach fire.

The glass was falling rapidly on day 4, the sky overcast and some drizzle was falling. Our schedule was to make for Whitemark to collect supplies and then push on to Lady Barron.

Tom Delaney's local knowledge came to our rescue. Most anxious that we leave Whitemark as quickly as possible, Tom said: "When the glass falls like this and we have misty drizzle, four times out of five a blow is imminent."

Blow it did. As we left Whitemark, the wind swung to the north-west at 20 knots. Within minutes it was 25 knots with visibility down to about 500 yards. In went the first reef. With gusts to 30 knots, in went the second reef.



The wind was on our starboard quarter and we ran at 8 knots for the protection offered by the islands of Franklin Sound some 15 miles distant. With visibility worsening all the time, we frequently lost sight of the other boats in our convoy. As we entered Franklin Sound, the gusts and the sea built quickly to short, steep, confused waves.

While we hung onto the fully

reefed main and no.2 jib, our log needle stuck on the maximum 10 knots for long periods. With the gusts reaching 42 knots, down came the main. The log need remained on 190 knots with the boat under no.2 jib only. The wind was still strengthening as we reached the protection of Trousers Point but the seas were much smoother in its lee.

During this wild, surfing ride we were thrilled by the way our Sun Birds handled. They were amazingly stable, relatively dry and above all delightfully responsive and controllable. At no stage were we out of control.

We motored the last mile to Lady Barron through the tricky, shallow passages and moored alongside the sturdy local cray and shark boats at the jetty.

Over the next three days, with the weather worsening and the wind reaching a peak of 62 knots (in our sheltered position), we got to know some of the island people and learned how hospitable they can be. They were wonderful, always offering to help in some way or another from providing fresh fish or crayfish to everyone to making their homes available to the girls for hot showers.

We finally left Lady Barron, after replenishing our supplies, in bright sunshine and smooth seas, heading for Swan Island about two miles off the northeastern tip of the Tasmanian mainland. Some of our party motored on, into the mainland, to complete the Bass Strait crossing and collect a souvenir handful of Tasmanian sand.

Having reached our halfway mark

cleanest we had ever seen and the water was crystal clear. With the rugged mountains added, the scenery was magnificent and unspoiled.

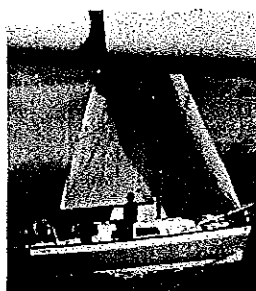
We returned to Lady Barron with the aim of collecting final supplies and heading north. Unfortunately, the wind was against our doing this by the east coast so we retraced our path via the west coast to Killis Crankle — an enjoyable day's sail of about 60 miles.

Next day we enjoyed an easterly breeze which gave us a 20-mile spinnaker run to Deal Island. We arrived in time for a swim and lunch at East Cove — another jewel with white sand, the shelter of high cliffs, and wallabies hopping along the beach.

Deal Island has one of the main lighthouses in the southern Australian system, maintained by two families who keep the station jetty and houses in meticulous order. They welcomed us, entertained us to afternoon coffee, offered showers and finally drove us the 3 km. to watch the process of lighting the light.

The view from the top of the lighthouse is breathtaking. One can see Flinders Island to the south and Wilson Promontory to the north-west plus all the reefs, islands and rocks between. Deal Island is alive with wildlife. The wallabies are the most prolific. About 15,000 of them occupy an area of about eight square miles. Unafraid of man, they will accept a morsel offered from the barbecue.

With the weather forecast unfavorable, we decided to make a run for Port Albert on the mainland. We set off in low cloud and mist. As the day progressed, it became evident that unless we motored, we could not reach our destination before nightfall.

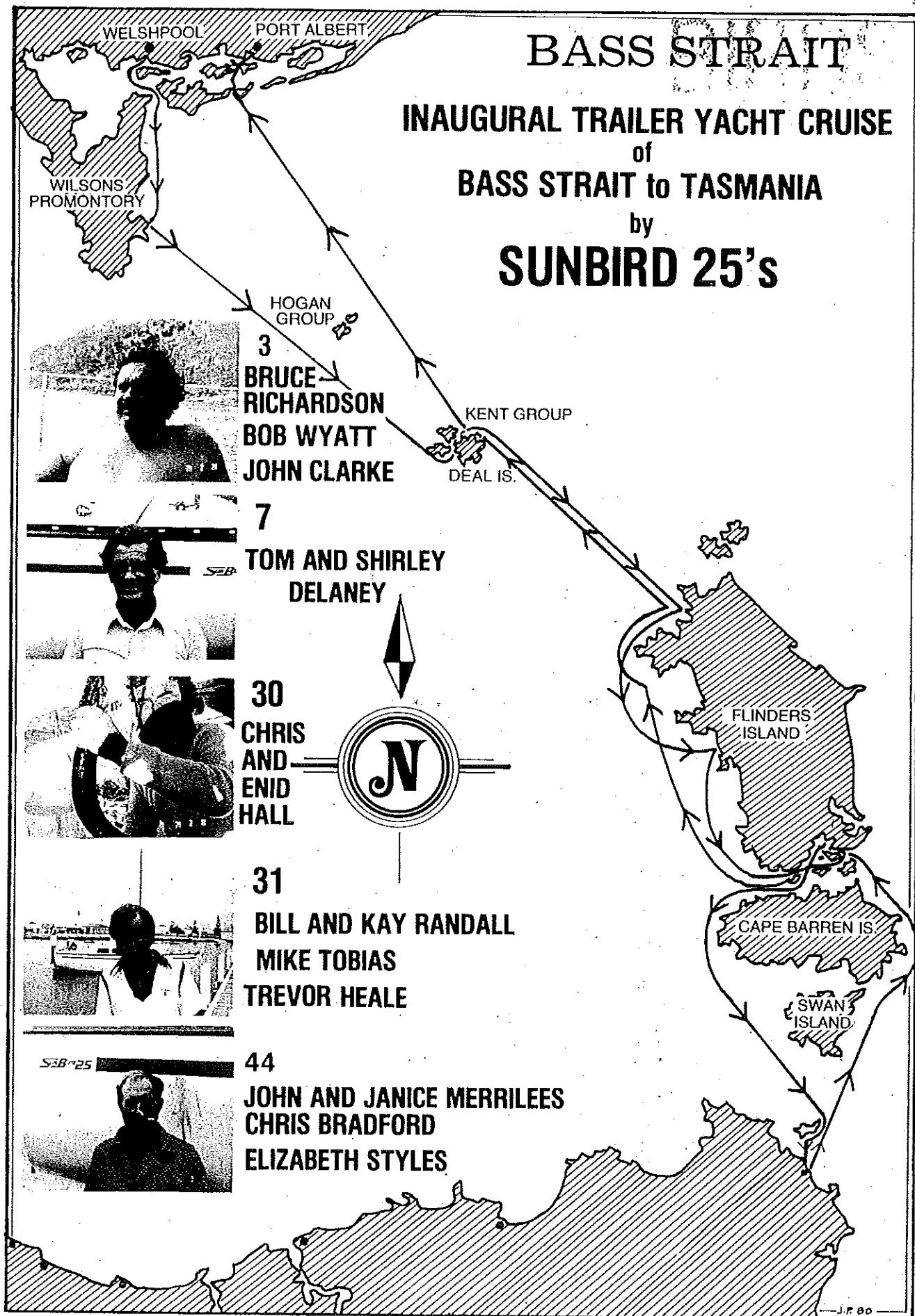


Fog closed in and visibility was down to about 50 yards for several hours. Some anxious moments followed the sound of a large ship's fog horn somewhere to the north-east. Sounding every three minutes. It passed to the north of us, going west. We kept a sharp lookout after that. The fog cleared and we were relieved to find we were just one mile west of the Port Albert channel beacons.

Arriving at the Port Albert jetty on February 24 having sailed some 427 nautical miles in 14 days, we adjourned to the pub for a celebration.

On Jo-An 2, we used 18 gallons of fuel and 40 gallons of fresh water. Cost of provisions and fuel, including those bought along the way, was less than \$200. We thought we had an excellent boat before we left, we were convinced of it on our return.

— Australian Sailing.



AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY. WINNERS

Sunmaid 20

DIVISION A

1st	CURRENT AFFAIR	J. BENNETT	(VIC)
2nd	ALOUETTE	P. DRANSFIELD	(VIC)
3rd	JOAN II	H. DAVIS	(VIC)

DIVISION B (After Countback)

1st	LALI	A. QUINN	(VIC)
2nd	TANAHE	O. MARTIN	(VIC)
3rd	SERENITY	J. KLOPPROGGE	(VIC)

DIVISION C

1st	SOLAIRE	G. McFARLANE	(VIC)
2nd	DIAMOND BLUES	R. HAUGHTON	(VIC)
3rd	LAZY DAYS	L. SOMMERS	(VIC)

Sunbird 25

1st	JO-ANN II	J. MERRILLES	(VIC)
2nd	MURPHY'S LAW	E. HALL	(VIC)
3rd	TORTLE	S. PHILLIPS	(VIC)

LADY SKIPPER

1st	FAMILY AFFAIR	SANDRA CONNOLLY
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JUNIOR SKIPPER

1st	SHADRACK	CHRIS BIBBY
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How the Littlies beat the Bass

The nudists of Bass Strait are accustomed to having their privacy invaded from time to time by cruising yachtsmen. But it was a toss-up whose eyes opened widest when a fleet of five little boats hove into view and parked themselves along Erith Island's famed nuddy beach.

It is, after all, an extremely secluded spot, out here in the Kent group many nautical miles from nowhere.

And the five smart little yachts were trailer-sailers.

Now, it is a rare sight to see five yachts of any kind cruising in company out in the dire Strait.

But trailer-sailers!

Were they mad? How on earth had they got there? Where were they going? Were they in need of assistance and/or certifying as lunatics? Who on earth were they?

The answers to these quite reasonable questions are: Not really. Without much difficulty, Tasmania or bust. Far from it.

And the boats, all Sunbird 25s, were Lazy Days II, skipper Tom Delaney; Summerwind II, Bill Randall; Jo-An II, Joh Merrilles; Ripper, Bruce Richardson; and Margie Too, Chris Hall.

This intrepid bevy of little beauties set out from Port Welshpool, called in at Refuge Cove, said hello to the Kent Group nudists (looking them straight in the eye all the time, of course), idled around Flinders Island, then Swan Island,

set foot on the Tasmanian mainland, and came home.

Just like that? Yes, George, more or less just like that.

In 10 days of actual sailing, this intrepid little fleet covered 440 sea miles, motoring when there wasn't enough breeze to push them along at five knots and very sensibly staying in when things looked too dodgy outside.

They had only two frights, which as any Bass Strait addict will tell you is not bad going. It blew up really nasty as they were on the way round to Lady Barron at the southern end of Flinders Island.

Tom Delaney, who is coxswain of the Western-port pilot boat when he's not cruising his Sunbird, shepherded them all in to safe anchorage in the little fishing harbor.

They sat out the blow for three days. It was force 10 at times, which is no breeze for little yachts to be out in. Or even big ones.

Sitting it out had its advantages. There were many fine meals of crayfish.

The other trauma was when Chris Hall found an uncharted rock round the back of Cape Barren Island and lost his propeller on it and a bit of rudder.

Volvo, with whom Hall has quite a bit of clout, flew out a new prop in 24 hours and a local abalone diver fitted it on underwater in five minutes flat.

Now it's not the sort of jaunt that any trailable yacht should tackle, far from it. Safety was the keynote of this cruise. Nothing was left to chance.

They picked February as a time of year when weather records show the dreaded Strait is at its most benign. The longest leg of the cruise was 60 miles. There was no night sailing.

And there was plenty of experience among the skippers. Cruising in company meant that the old sea dogs were always on hand to pass on their wisdom if necessary.

If the sunbird saga inspires you to rig your trailable yacht and tackle Bass Strait solo, the word from Delaney, Hall, Richardson and Co. is DON'T! It took teamwork and large lumps of experience to keep the cruise happy.

The Sunbird squad logged a couple of new Bass Strait species, incidentally. On Flinders Island they discovered the Cape Barren Gobbling Goose, otherwise known as a feral turkey, which proved quite edible.

And on Wilson's Prom they recorded, not for the last time, the Refuge Cove Beer'n'ags Bot. Really, fellows if you're going on an extended cruise do provision yourselves adequately with the necessities of life.

— Enid Webster
"Undine"

SUN BIRD 25 — MAXI TS

Big sister of the popular Sun Maid 20 this new maxi trailer yacht sets new standards in small yacht comfort — she has an inboard diesel too!

Just what is a maxi trailer-sailer? To Melbourne yacht manufacturer and experienced offshore racing sailor, Chris Hall, it is the evolution of TS's to a stage where they can match a 30 foot yacht or cruiser for luxury touches such as standing headroom and a shower.

As builder of Victoria's most popular TS, the pretty little Sun Maid 20, Chris also had some definite ideas about how he would improve his next trailer-sailer. For instance, he felt that for quick exits off awkward launch ramps and for really efficient engine power, he would life an inboard diesel, no less, in his next TS.

After seeing the interest in a bigger breed of trailer yacht build up in his home state in 1975, Chris decided to commission the designer of the Sun Maid, New Zealander John Brooker, to come up with a maxi trailer yacht. Chris did not start out with any real limitations on size, but after much study of overseas designs, and work with Brookes in New Zealand on a mock-up of the boat, he settled on a husky, shortened 25 footer.

At first glance the Sun Bird 25, as the new maxi was to be called, looked to be rather bulky on a trailer but this image was soon dispelled when people saw the boat afloat. She certainly is a high-sided chunky-looking boat, but all the same she has a certain style and character that makes her appealing under sail.

At her debut in the 1976 Melbourne Sail Boat Show, the Sun Bird demonstrated her popular appeal when it came to winning wives who were tired of cramped cabins and facilities that really were not quite like home.

With an interior layout that rivalled larger cruising yachts such as the Columbia 27, Pacific 27 and others in the standing headroom category, the Sun Bird won many non-boating for the first time.

Chris Hall says the most remarkable thing about the success of the Sun Bird was that it didn't really take from the existing ranks of trailer sailor owners. Most buyers were first timers who had a rumabout at their previous boat.

The Sun Bird has an interior that is really comfortable, by any standards.

She measures 25 foot along the deck and with high freeboard and a beamy hull, she has the interior space of some bigger yachts. With a beam of 8' 2" (the maximum trailer width allowed in Australia) tapering only slightly in the aft sections, the boat retains a lot of room around the cockpit area.

The interior could have been badly organised under poorer management but Chris Hall (who is something of a perfectionist) put a lot of time into working out the interior with designer, John Brooker. The result is one of the best planned stock interiors that I have seen in an Australian or overseas stock yacht. Without even a hint of crowding you do get six full sized berths, six foot headroom, a four seater dinette, large galley, enclosed forward cabin and room for a shower.

A yacht is for sailing, and not just living in, so with this in mind, I took the opportunity early in 1978 to test sail the Sun Bird on her home ground — the grey waters of Port Phillip Bay.

Our outing consisted of a grand tour of the not so terrific launching facilities of Port Phillip followed by a launching of what seemed to be a waterway out of the English midlands.

MEANDERING DOWN THE MURRAY

Someone said, that when Colom-bus sailed west with his three boats, he didn't know where he was going, when he arrived he didn't know where he had been. Times have changed, for when three Sunmaids and one Red Baron Catamaran went North from Melbourne last August, their skippers knew they were bound for Echuca on the Murray. They knew where they were at all times (well, most of the time), thanks to the excellent charts they carried, and when they got back they knew that they had cruised some of the most beautiful and interesting river scenery in their boating experience.

We rendezvoused at Thomsons Beach in Cobram for a 1.30 p.m. start. The sun was shining warmly and as we relaxed on the sand, Bob Dack was heard to say "If we get no further than this I'll be happy". However, we did get further than that — 130 river miles further.

State forests skirted the river and we were delighted with the beautiful trees, many of which are old and gnarled into fascinating shapes.

Theriver has many snags but they were easy to navigate at the river level, although a watchful eye had to be kept. The current was swift and, of course, this helped our fuel consumption considerably. Although we had hopefully hoisted sails, the winds were not favorable and reluctantly we had to motor almost the entire way.

Our first stopping place was Tocumwal. The town jetty was empty and big enough for us all to tie up to. Tocumwal has some interesting old buildings but lacks the prosperous appearance of Cobram. Very close to our mooring place is an enormous synthetic murray cod which is used as a wishing well to raise money for one of the local organizations. There were the usual remarks about "the biggest one", etc.

An early start next morning found us lowering our masts to pass under the Tocumwal bridge, but you all know how easy that is on a Sunmaid, then on our way downstream.

We saw hundreds of cockeys, galas parrots and waterbirds. The noise made by the cockeys was deafening but it was lovely to see them in such numbers, flying free.

We stopped for lunch on one of the sandy beaches and looked for the white breasted sea eagle which is found in this area, but apart from Neville, who saw a bird similar to the description, we looked in vain. Each night we found a suitable

stopping place where a campfire was quickly lit and after dinner our talented guitarist, joined by two clarinets and a mouth-organ entertained us with the old songs. There's something special about songs around a campfire, and we all had feelings of well-being on retiring to our comfortable bunks.

At Barmah, a small town, we filled water and petrol tanks and our food supplies, although the store here is not overstocked. The Pub put on a good counter lunch, despite the fact that the lady cook had gone shopping for the day and left the publican to do the cooking. He was somewhat shocked when ten of us walked in for lunch, but did an admirable job.

After leaving Barmah we came to the entrance of the Barmah and Moira Lakes and although the thought of a brisk sail was tempting we could see they were very shallow and so continued downstream.

Noting on our charts that P.S. Murrumbidgee had burnt along the way and that the remains were still visible, we walked along the river bank and came across a few metal stanchions. After searching we found more and finally could make out the shape of the bow of a boat. They were protruding from the ground about 6", and we wished we had brought shovels to dig a bit and see what else we could find.

At the entrance of the Ooulburn River we passed a few rather poor looking houses and were amazed that this area is not used more. However as we approached Echuca the river became slightly busier.

There was ample room for us to pass under the lovely old bridge and we were delighted to see ahead of us the tall wharfs of this historic place.

Echuca has great charm and we knew that we would enjoy our stay here. It was founded in 1850 by a convict — Henry Hopewood — who after serving only 5 months of his 14 year sentence, settled on the south bank of the Murray. He built an inn and shops just south of the wharf and soon after put a punt across the river. He soon had a monopoly on river crossings, made a great profit from them and with great foresight built the elegant Bridge Hotel, where people waiting for the punt quenched their thirst. This hotel is beautifully restored and used as a restaurant where one can eat in an old world, candle lit atmosphere.

We were surrounded by Australian history from the moment we stepped ashore. There is a fascinating wharf once 1 kilometre in length standing 9

metres above the summer level of the river. The reason for the lofty structure is the seasonal fluctuation of river levels at Echuca. Here we explored P.S. Pevensey built in 1910 and completely restored, one of the 100 river boats that once steamed thousands of miles up and down the Murray.

In the cargo shed are three models depicting various aspects of the history of the Port, which in its heyday was the most important inland port in Australia, and a 6 minute video — visual of the Port story, all of which we found very interesting.

Once outside the wharf there are steam-engines, an enormous log buggy built entirely of redgum, museums full of relics from the past, the Steampacket Hotel — one of only 3 or 4 of the 86 hotels left, and a host of things to keep you intrigued. All in all, we found our trip had just about everything we could wish for — except perhaps sailing, and we hope next year's cruise some more people shall join us in seeing more of this mighty Murray River. Coming? — Enid Webster
"Undine"

Sail, Power — OR BOTH

The Gippsland Lakes seem to be Sunmaid and Sunbird country, judging by the number of them around the area. Rik Dovey takes a hard look at the Sunmaid twins and discusses their virtues and values.

Three and a half years ago, Melbourne yachtsman Chris Hall decided to have a go at the trailer sailers scene in Victoria with a design from New Zealand that he called the Sunmaid 20. The success of the move is shown in the sales of the craft with almost 240 Sunmaids on the water and demand still steady.

With the success of the 20 footer and the development in Australia of larger trailer sailers, it was logical for Hall to look to a larger version of the Sunmaid and the result in mid 1977 became the Sunbird 25. It's selling well, proving to many of its buyers to be an obvious step-up from the smaller trailer sailers.

Seen by some manufacturers and dealers as being the pacesetter in the TS field in Victoria, no-one was surprised to see Hall go a step further when he released a motor sailer version of the Sunbird at Melbourne's Sailboat 78.

While the release of the 25 TS could be reasonably assumed in the light of its successful "little brother", the motor sailer was a

gamble. Hall displayed a wide, toothy grin when he pointed out that within two months of its release he had sold nine motor sailers.

To try out the new boats I accepted his offer of joining a Sunmaid/Sunbird Association regatta at Geelong. The weekend produced two days of full gales and a third comparatively "pleasant" strong north easterly. As more than a dozen boats remained at their berths it was hardly surprising to find their crews had turned their attention to shore attractions, and one look at some of the bleary eyes explained some of the worst slab reefs I've ever seen as the crews began their slogs home. Ignoring "Captain Bligh-type" insinuations, I joined two crews who gulped down lots of coffee before leaving the break-water.

Eric Little and his three teenage children gave me the thriller of their Sunbird TS which Eric had bought second-hand only a week earlier and was preparing for a trailer cruise to the Barrier Reef and back. The first continued on page 5

Exploring Port Stephens and Myall Lakes

Five Victorians Sunmalds and one Sunbird spent a very happy time in January, 1979 at Port Stephens and the Myall Lakes, N.S.W. — namely Maureen and Gavin Hogan, Shirley and John Sullivan, Florence and Alan Miller, Margaret and Gil Lunberg, Betty and Bob Dack and Kay and Bill Randall. Also present were a certain Boomeroo and Adventure 22 — Judith and George Ramsay, Carolyn and Trevor Heale — who kept us bright company. Local Port Stephens Sunmalds Peter Maynard and his wife, Andrea extended terrific hospitality to some of these fun-seeking people (including ourselves) when we arrived at Nelson's Bay in the middle of a 48-hour downpour. It was really great to know that somebody up there loved us!

Boat ramps in the area are situated at Little Nelson Bay (known locally as Little Beach) Nelson Bay, Salamander Bay and Soldiers' Point (3 ramps at the latter). These at the first three bays and one of the Soldiers' Point ramps face northward, while the remaining two S.P. ramps have a southerly aspect, which gives plenty of choice according to wind conditions, tide however must be kept in mind with a range of six to seven feet. Salamander Bay has limited turning space near the ramp, but compensates by having a hotel and jetty handy, plus caravan park across the road where cars and trailers may be left.

We were surprised at the size of Nelsons Bay — a bustling resort town with a wide range of shops. Shoal Bay to the east is a very beautiful resort which caters well for the tourist. The local R.S.L. Club is available to visitors and provides a very good counter tea at moderate prices.

No sooner had the sun shone than we were launched and away across Port Stephens, sailing in behind Corrie Island to the entrance of the Myall River and the town of Tea Gardens. Now here is a misnamed town, for we expected no more than a kiosk and found instead a fully fledged small town spread along the waterfront. The ladies were ecstatic to find a well-serviced laundromat in front of our chosen anchorage. We noted the cheap counter lunch at the local pub and the more expensive restaurant with deluxe take-away food (beautiful cheeses etc.). The local caravan park provided clean showers at reasonable cost. Alan and Florence launched at Tea Gardens and were invited to join our group. Randall's discovered that the bridge nearby is to be treated with care by Sunbirds which, like keelboats, have to wait for low tide

In order to have sufficient mast-room, to Sunmalds — no problem. We motored up the river some 20 miles to the Broadwater (the first lake). Choosing a course to dodge the shallows we sailed for Legge's Camp at Bombah Point to tie up overnight. The camp was rather a run-down affair, but a well-stocked shop was well patronised. The following day we motor-sailed up river to Boolambay Lake, past Violet Hill and entered the final and largest lake Myall Lake.

As we chattered on radio to determine which part of the lake might provide a sheltered anchorage for New Year's Eve, a friendly N.S.W. voice bought into the conversation warning us of mudflats and inviting us to join his group of yachts at Tickerbit (lovely name!) just past the entrance to the lake. The welcome was tremendous. N.S.W. Sunmalds from the Botany Bay Yacht Club swam out to greet us, grabbed our anchors and had us all tied up before you could say "You're enjoying yourself too much, you'd better go to bed!" We found trailerable yachts of many kinds present plus a few keelboats and cruisers, and about 60 people happily saw the New Year in around a camp fire on the beach.

January 1st was good sailing weather so we enjoyed a good beat to the far end of the lake at Bungail. We found no town, for that is a mile or so away from the water, but just a sawmill cedar was logged here years ago. While some folk decided to spend a night or two on a pleasant beach at Narand, we sailed back past Tickerbit to Johnsons Hill near Goat Island. Ex-Victorian Gerard Nehemiah, his wife Hamke and daughter, Wendy, joined us here in their Boomerang the following day. Gerard and Eric Skewes (former Victorian TS 16 man) have gone into the boat hiring business at Port Stephens with four RL 28's.

News of the approach of a southerly buster sent us scurrying back to Tickerbit that night. Lundbergs, Sullivans and Maynards, who had delayed at Nelsons Bay, joined us here. A certain small boy in the crowd decided that Gil was "a nice stranger" and even thought he had a few loys tucked away below deck! Misty rain didn't deter the kids from having a good birthday party under beach umbrellas.

Having decided to try another section of the Myall River we motored up to Buladelah, a sleepy little town on the Princes Highway which has a non-self-service grocery complete with big wooden counter and a friendly butcher's shop completely enclosed in flywire

(curiosities to us city slickers). The next day saw us motoring back down river, making friends with cruiser people Sue and Jim Atteridge from Elanora, Sydney. We were struck by the friendliness of all boating people in the area — they even speak to each other! Before turning to the main stretch of river we just had to sail across Broadwater and try the surf at Mungo Brush. Our guest, Canadian exchange student Heather Sirra, had never experienced surf before and we could not get her out! After lingering for a day or two we headed back to another pleasant overnight riverbank spot before returning in the heat to Tea Gardens. This time we stirred the old town with our prawn and oyster waterfront party, washed down with 1½ gallons of white wine. Bill Randall's Sunbird was the object of the townsfolk's attention and, no doubt, gossip.

A good sail back to Port Stephens for the Dacks the others preferred to motor and we tied up in Fame Cove overnight — the best all-weather anchorage in the estuary, popular with keelboats but having very little beach. We were happy to have Eric Skewes and Pam sail over to greet us. The next day after farewelling Hogans at Salamander Bay and many swims at Soldiers' Point, we returned to Fame Cove. On our last sailing day at Port Stephens we had a lovely spinnaker run to Shoal Bay and were impressed with its beauty, its ocean swells and its icy water. Had time permitted we could have had an ocean sail. Our overnight anchorage was on moorings at Little Beach while visiting the R.S.L. and the Skewes' home.

It hurt to pull the boats out and farewell our friends, but we had time for an overnight visit to Lake Macquarie and a week in Sydney. Where we spent several nights tied up at a friend's marina (at Balgowlah, North Harbour after launching at Manly). It was really good to have a chance to sail in The Harbour. We're convinced it's the only way to see Sydney! We finally achieved our aim of a sail with Anne and Jim Brown on their East Coast 31 when we joined them for a mid-week race which took place just as a cold front went through — most exciting!

After some Sydney hospitality — seafood restaurant etc. — we left on our return journey around the coast to Melbourne. We can recommend the area for scenic interest, good sailing and good company. It helps, of course, to have your own mad sailing mates along.

— Betty Dack.

SAIL, POWER OR BOTH....

continued from page 4

thing that struck me was the quality of the finish. Considering the popularity of the Sunmald I was expecting to see a first class finish, and I was not disappointed. Even after a year's sailing by its previous owner the glass work was still top notch, and the thought and craftsmanship that had gone into the interior was of the same standard.

With the wind a steady 12 to 15 knots and gusting to 25 knots I was expecting plenty of pinching and hauling on the tiller when the crew hoisted their Number Two genoa and the mainsail with only one reef. But when we got out into the open Bay it was a pleasant surprise. While we were a little over-cruised, the Sunbird never became a handful, and with intelligent feathering in the gusts it was still easy handling pushing along at a steady six knots on the wind. Putting the craft about, pulling away onto a reach and gybing were all handled without fuss, considering the fact that the crew had sailed on the boat only three or four times. Eric had owned a Sunmald before and he feels that the larger Sunbird is easier to handle and more tolerant of mistakes.

Keeping both sails full and pulling in the gusts supported his argument. While weather helm built up as is only natural, it was not to reach the stage of having to be halved back as I've found on some other similar trailer sailers. The Sunbird is a well balanced craft and I could find no vices. With the strong winds this was no day for spinnakers but they are available and their area of 540 sq. feet, would improve the performance considerably in light winds. The kite is optional to the stage that Hall sells the Sunbird and new owners will find the standard complement adequate.

The Sunbird 25 TS sells for \$16,950 complete for sail away except for engine and trailer.

The Sunbird takes the Volvo Penta 7½ h.p. diesel which, in the full inboard version costs \$2,700, and with stern drive costs \$2,950. The tilt trailer cost \$1,875 (July 1978).

hand. All halyards and sheets lead off to the cockpit with Melsner winches for sheets and halyards.

Aluminium toe rails, pushpit and pulpit with all-round lifelines provide security on deck.

Sunbird owners will have to find extra cash for instruments such as logs and compasses as they are not provided in the basic sale, but Chris Hall provides all the necessary basic safety equipment.

He does not sell his craft at various stages of completion for two reasons. "I find 90 per cent of our buyers want everything, so that's what they get. Also by knowing what equipment we need for orders we can buy in bulk and so keep prices down."

There's a considerable jump in price to the Sunbird Motor Sailer. She sells for \$22,000, but a lot more is provided in the same basic hull for the extra money.

Hall felt there was a wide open market for motor sailers, particularly in Victoria, and felt the best place to start with the proven design of the Sunbird.

Hall has aimed to provide families with a cruising boat with plenty of space and comfort.

A considerably lengthened cockpit with raised doghouse are the obvious visual alterations.

The cockpit has been lengthened at the expense below of one berth and the galley. The galley goes outside into the cockpit under the protection of the doghouse.

The helmsman uses wheel steering on the port side under the doghouse with protection from wrap-around armour glass windows. The aluminium frame includes sliding side windows for communication with the foredeck. His seat is the lee box, and the wheel console includes full instrumentation.

Overhead there is a square perspex hatch for observing the mainsail, however it's not nearly large enough or far enough forward as the skipper presently has to leave his seat and lean right back to see the huff of the mainsail. With the raised stern the pushpit has been done away with and a swimmer's platform is installed on the trans-



Three sails are included in the purchase price. They are a number two genoa (130 square feet), number three jib (90 sq. feet), and mainsail (140 sq. feet). Reefing is slab.

Accommodation is for six with all berths exceeding 1.829 m. in length. This is made up of two single berths forward, a quarter berth, a settee berth and the table folds down to form a double berth.

There is standing headroom in the fully carpeted cabin. Marine head and a spirit stove mounted on gimbals are included in the specification. No interior space is wasted, even to the stage where open side lockers fill in those small areas around the cabin sides that are sometimes wasted. Eric Little and his family should have little trouble finding space for all their equipment for their long cruise.

The standard perspex fore hatch lets plenty of light into the fore and cabin area and is protected by an exterior grill.

On deck, the experience of the smaller Sunmald shows in its bigger brother. The layout of fittings is simple with everything easy to

reach. A buoyancy/storage tank moulded inside the transom provides seating for three and plenty of storage space. Removable wooden slat seats line the sides of the cockpit and provide extra seating when needed.

With the doghouse getting in the way, the motor sailer's halyards are winched and set on the mast and there is only one genoa lead running aft to the cockpit. The foresail is self tacking which is a practical move.

The doghouse makes access to the foredeck more difficult than the TS version, however it's by no means difficult.

The motor sailer is provided with three sails. The mainsail is slightly smaller at 130 sq. feet, losing 10 sq. feet for the higher boom. There is a 100 sq. feet jib which can be roller reefed, and a 200 sq. feet reacher for light airs.

Carrying extra weight, the MS is somewhat slower than the TS under sail. But despite its ungainly appearance I found it had the same easy motion and it was a pleasure to

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This boat has got it Maid

The new Sun Maid 20 model has been made more comfortable and efficient with four full size bunks. Its popularity is attested to by the fact that a Sun Maid Association has been formed in Adelaide with a membership of more than 20 boats.

The new model can be inspected at Adelaide Outboard Service, Daws Road. It costs about \$10,000.

The main improvement is the relocation of the centreboard in the cabin to make more space available.

Sun Maid 20 is a ballasted centreboard sloop of medium displacement designed by New Zealander John Brooke to race competitively in the quarter-ton or Junior Offshore Group divisions.

It is also designed to provide safe, comfortable family cruising with facilities and accommodation usually associated with larger yachts.

Easily handled ashore or afloat by a crew of two, Sun Maid can be moored or trailered to the sea.

The hull deck and interior are moulded separately in fibreglass to Lloyd's specifications.

The lead ballast is moulded and

bolled into the bottom of the skeg. The galvanised steel centreplate is raised and lowered by a simple winch.

Total ballast and centreplate weight is 363 kilograms to give a 45 p.c. ballast ratio. Coupled with advanced design in the hull shape this gives stability and performance.

The cabin is roomy with four bunks and better than 1.37 metres headroom. There are 11 large storage areas below bunk level, with cupboard and locker space above. Sink, ice box and stove shelf are built-in.

The cockpit is self draining with a 46-centimetre bridge deck with spray moulds comfortably angled. Six adults can sit in the cockpit.

The rig uses anodised aluminium spars, heavy duty dacron sails with a range of head sails for comfortable performance.

The John Brooke design reflects nearly 50 years of practical design and sailing experience. The hand-laid solid fibreglass construction is in excess of Lloyd's requirements.

Mr Ken Robertson of Adelaide Outboard, says the safety features include a self-righting and self-draining cockpit. As the centre case is integrally moulded into the hull, there is no danger of leaks developing there. The lead ballast does not exert sailing strains on the centreplate or its casing.

The fuel tank is built in for an auxiliary motor.

The boat comes with a No. 2 genoa and mainsail with roller reefing with the spinnaker equipment and trailer extra.

Specifications Sun Maid: length 6.096 metres, beam 2.28 metres, draught (plate up) 38 centimetres, plate down 1 metre, displacement 817 kg., ballast 363 kg.

TOM'S TASSIE TRAUMA

Shirl and I woke at 0600 after spending a pleasant night at anchor in Killcrankie Bay Flinders Island.

It was nice to see the other four Sunbirds anchored around us. It had been a wonderful trip with a wonderful group, particularly the wives who had the confidence in their husbands to share this adventurous trip, they seemed to enjoy every moment of it.

After cleaning up the beach from the previous nights barbecue, the group got underway at 0800. After clearing the land under motor, up went the Mainsails and Spinnakers with a 10 to 12 knot North-East wind on our Starboard quarter. Away we went at 8 knots, sailing at its best. This had been the pattern for the whole trip, except for the three days sheltering in Lady Barron at Flinders Island.

After five hours of great sailing the wind started to moderate abeam of the Kent Group. The arrangement was to stay there for the night. After having been out for three weeks and having sailed 468 miles since leaving home and having another three days sailing to reach Westernport. We told the other of our intention to press on over the radio, they agreed and wished us a good trip home. I little realised how sorry I would be later in the evening.

We had to start the motor at 1400, the wind had dropped to 3 knots. I took the opportunity to check my course with Chris Hall, and I could not see Hogan's which was the next island on our course. My course agreed with his. I then realised there was a haze settling over the Strait, at 1600 hours we took the sails down as there was only a light air of North East. We opened the motor up to full throttle. We could just see the top of Mt. at the Prom; the rest of the land was completely covered in thick fog. I realised we would not pass the shipping lane off the Prom called Little Bourke Street till dark and hoped the fog did not reach that far out to sea.

After a meal at 1900 we passed Rododots and straight into the thickest fog I had ever experienced in 35 years of boating.

At 2000 as it got dark, the sails were dripping, our clothes were wet as if we had been in heavy rain. We could just see the faint glow of the mast-head light, only 23 feet up we could not see the bow, or even the water alongside.

We decided to keep going till the fog showed we had travelled 78 miles, which should put us 2 miles off the coast, inside of the shipping lane. At 2230 we decided to drop the anchor. I had to join the Spinnaker and Genoa sheet to the anchor line, to reach the bottom in 35 fathoms of water, the 15lb. anchor line would not hold, so I pulled it up and put on the 30lb. anchor on the line, and said the Shirl it would take an hour to pull it up in the morning.

Then we turned the motor off as the engine noise went from our ears much to my surprise we could hear a ship's engine beating in the fog. It is always hard to pin-point either the direction or distance of any ship in a fog as the moisture seems to echo the sound but this seemed fairly close and coming towards us. I decided to stay put, the chance of our being in the direct line of the ships was very slim.

I have been five years working alongside of and near to ships and had a fair knowledge of proximity by engine noise realised this was about a mile away and approaching. I tried to keep calm but after the last two hours tension, my nerves cracked. Running to the bow, the anchor started to come in three foot grabs. I'm sure it came in under 2 minutes the 30lb. anchor out of 35 fathoms.

My breath was rasping in my throat, and I was shaking from exertion, Shirl had plugged the spotlight in and pointing it, in the air but it was penetrating no more than 12 to 18 feet upwards. By this time the engine noise of the ship was very loud, the fog seemed to be vibrating with it. I started the motor

and opened it flat out, a quick look at the compass show we were, heading the wrong way, back out to sea. I turned towards the Prom; what an awful sensation not being able to see the water alongside the Sunbird. It was like a nightmare of running your hardest from danger, and not moving.

After approximately 4 to 5 minutes later the Sunbird lifted on a 2 to 3 foot wave and surfed forward, then on another. I thought we must be in shallow water near the Ansen Group of the Island, then realised it was the bow wave of the ship. It has passed us going toward N.W. My relief was so great my knees turned to jelly I flopped down on the cockpit seat. I could not swallow my mouth was bone dry and my tongue seemed twice its normal size.

I heard Shirl in a tiny shaken voice say "I feel sick", her face was very drawn and pale, she looked so pathetic, huddled in her wet gear and life jacket in the Starboard corner of the cockpit. I pulled myself together and started thinking rationally again, the tide must have been against us, coming from the Kent Group and I'd anchored in the shipping lane. We decided to motor in another 30 minutes, this should put us approximately 1/2 to 1 mile off the Prom; mistake no. 2. Apparently the tide had changed and was pushing us along.

After 1/2 an hour I dropped the anchor, and stopped the motor, we were shocked to hear waves breaking on rocks. After 10 minutes there was a slight break in the fog, not more than 200 feet away we could see waves breaking against a sheer cliff, and the Prom light flashed for a second to our left, then everything disappeared in the fog again. We were both relieved to know where we were and horrified to realise, another 30 seconds motoring would have wrecked us.

It was midnight by this time, Shirl put the kettle on and we had a cuppa and biscuits. We spent a very uncomfortable night with the Sunbird jumping around in the backwash of the cliffs, and my standing in the cabin door in case the anchor should drag.

At daylight the next morning it was still impossible to see the Prom only 150 feet away. At 0700 hours a breeze of Easterly sprang up, and at 0800 the fog started to break up, looking at the land we realised how lucky we were, as we could never have got ashore if we had hit the cliffs the night before. There were 10 to 12 foot waves surging up a sheer basalt cliff for 1/2 a mile either side of us. We rounded the Prom and heading for San Remo at 0900. It was incredible to sail into a world of sunshine, clear sky and visibility, with the fog outside of us moving in an unbroken bank to the South West as far as the eye could see.

Shirl recovered quicker than I, at 1000 I put my head down for a quick nap while Shirl took the tiller. Three hours later I woke, and we were abeam of Cape Liptrap, half-way to San Remo, so much for the weaker sex.

We arrived at San Remo at 1930 and laid the night, swapping yarns with the local fisherman, we left for Flinders at 0900 in a 20-25 knot North-West wind, reefed Main and No. 2, we enjoyed every moment of it.

We arrived home at 1400 having logged 624 miles since leaving home three weeks before. I would like to congratulate Chris Hall and Co. on the sailing from the Kent Group without sight of any island on the Prom, arriving directly off the entrance to Port Albert, the rule of thumb navigation at its best.

One can't go wrong sailing in such company. Shirl and I have already planned a trip to the Kent Group next January for two weeks with two other boats from the local Yacht Club. I will have tide tables for the Prom and the Kent Group as well as a very efficient fog horn.

Tom Delaney Snr.
Editor's note: Tom, we lived every moment of that with you. Thank you for sharing it with us.

SAIL, POWER OR BOTH ...

continued from page 5

handle under sail, admittedly at a more sedate pace. The test boat was not helped by a poorly cut jib that would have been easily re-cut to fix an inefficient peak.

The response to the wheel steering was disappointingly slow on the test sail, however that was acknowledged by Hall and he has since altered the pin position on the rudder stock and says that cured the fault.

Under power the MS handled well. The engine size has been doubled to 15 h.p. for this version, and the Volvo Penta diesel has a reputation for reliability. It's quiet enough not to be a major intrusion after the calm of sail power. Diesel of course means reduced risk of fire and recommends itself from a safety point of view. The spacious cockpit with seating for eight and plenty of standing room is undoubtedly the feature of this yacht, and it caters well for those on board.

The designer recognised that the larger cockpit would collect rainfall and a canopy is provided that seals the cockpit off completely when at anchor or tied up.

Sunlog, compass and full engine instrumentation are included in the price, the trailer being the only cost extra.

Due to the nature of the activities over the weekend it was not possible to watch either version being launched or landed. Owners of both craft said there was not problems in handling their craft on the trailers, although Hall says the motor sailer can be a handful in bad conditions. As he adds, the craft no problems on moorings.

The Sunbird 25 motor sailer version is a bold move into a relatively new area in this part of Australia and it is a well thought out craft. I feel it will prove to be popular amongst those with the time and dollars to cruise or just "potter" in comfort and who enjoy doing it.

under both sail and power.

The Sunbird 25 trailer sailer has proved its popularity in Victoria with more than 30 sold in the first 12 months. With a high standard of finish, seaworthiness and pleasant handling it is proving a good choice for those wishing to move up from the first, smaller trailer sailers, and for those who wish to join the TS fleet who have the experience and skill to handle a larger craft.

Sunbird TS. LOA: 7.62 m (25 ft.); beam: 2.93 m (8 ft 2 in.); draft (keel raised): 0.000 m (1 ft 8 in.); draft (keel lowered): 1.219 m (4 ft.); displacement: 6000 kg (13500 lb.); ballast: 600 kg (1200 lb.)

— Australian Seacraft

VICTORIA

North Shore Marina
46A The Strand, Williamstown
(03) 397 7312

The Show Stoppin' Sunbird

(continued from page 1)

There is a huge coachhouse with big armour glass front windows and sliding side windows set in solid alloy framing. The top is fibreglass and has a full liner.

A wheel is set to port with a very well equipped instrument panel that tells you all you want to know about the engine behaviour and a VDO log registers speed and distance.

A very big shelf and fiddles is set ahead of the controls and would easily take a radio and depth sounder with space to spare for all the bits and pieces that usually end up at the bottom of bins and lockers.

The starboard in the coachhouse is the galley with sink supplied with fresh water from a 20 gallon tank built into the bow. This is fitted with a very smart cover in the form of a cutting board and a two burner spirit stove is mounted along side.

In the test boat, the owner's wife had insisted on a bigger gas stove and grill which was just a shade too big for the space allocated. It stuck out and got in the way. The standard set-up would be better.

There are cupboards below and a flap table top for eating in the cockpit.

The skippers seat is upholstered and set on a big fibreglass base that is, in fact, a refrigerator driven from the boat's batteries. And all this is standard and included in the basic price, believe it or not.

Slat seats run fore and aft along both sides of the cockpit and a big upholstered thwart is set at the end over a locker, big enough to take the full complement of sails. A full liner provides side pockets on both sides and a platform is set outside on the transom with a step for boarding.

A Volvo 13 h.p. diesel supplies enough power to push the boat along at a good 7 knots and will cruise at 6 knots using only one litre of fuel per hour. There is enough power in this engine to override the effect of wind on sails so that an owner who is used to powerboats will have confidence in his ability to control the boat at all times.

The engine is set under the coach house floor and is fully accessible via a big hatch that can be completely removed. There is a hump on the hatch which I found a bit annoying as I kept tripping over it but I suppose there are things on every boat that take a little getting used to.

The coach house opens into the cockpit without any bulkhead so that there is a floor of about 8 ft. in length where a couple of inflatable mattresses could sleep extra passengers.

A waterproof cover is standard equipment and encloses the complete cockpit. It has entrances on the port side and at the stern. These flaps have double sided zippers so that they can be opened and closed from inside or out.

Although you would live up top, the cabin is most comfortable with plenty of room. As the hulls of shoal draft with long narrow keel, no centreboard plate case breaks the floor area.

Right forward is a V berth and Bruce Moonie who demonstrated the boat for us, says that he and his wife always sleep there so that they can leave the dinette made up.

The dinette is set to port with comfortably upholstered seating and a large table. When the table is dropped and the centre cushions are put in place, it becomes a full length double bunk.

Opposite to starboard is a settee which extends slightly beneath the galley to make another full length single bunk.

There is storage under all bunks and racks behind the settee and dinette with plate rack on the after bulkhead. The floor is fully carpeted.

A pump-out toilet is set to starboard with bulkheads to give privacy. The extension cushion for the starboard bunk fits over the toilet when not in use to provide extra seating. A barred hinged hatch opens on to the foredeck.

Up top, there is a good sized foredeck with anchor well that will hold anchor, and line as well as at least one bagged sail. A non slip surface if effectively set on all walking areas.

That is about the extent of deck space as the sidedecks are very narrow and the after section taken up with coach house and cockpit.

The rig is basic being of a three quarter sloop with high boom to clear the coach house. The mast is well stayed with forestay, backstay, capshrouds and fore and aft lowers.

The headsail is small and can be rigged as self tacking.

The day we went out for a sail, the wind was light — far too light and fluffy to attempt to sail through the packed moorings. It seemed to be blowing in a circle more than in any direction. Being a motor sailer, this was the obvious time to try out the motor part of the deal.

The Volvo 13 hp diesel burst into life at the touch of the button and we were away.

The first thing that came to notice was the feeling of power/cruiser that I had within the coach house with a small wheel in my hand but the way that the Sunbird could manoeuvre at low speed gave it the lie. Power cruisers are usually unmanageable under these conditions and need constant spurts of power across the rudder to turn them. The Sunbird ghosted along at idle revs with the full directional control that only comes with a keel yacht.

After a couple of miles at cruising speed of 6 knots and a few bursts of power at 7, we decided to hoist some sail. The rig is simple and the sail is not overlarge being the same as a standard Sunbird 25 yacht less 10 sq. ft. in the main. The headsail is the same as the small working jib on the sailing version.

We were lucky — the wind came up a little better and varied between 15 k, and zero for the rest of the day. The balance was superb. As a single hander you would be able to set the wheel and go forward to change sails without worry. Even when we were hit by gusts and calms, the boat held her course without coaxing.

I had expected the boat to be a bit tender with so much top hamper but, as was explained to me, there is virtually no increase in weight and the coach house roof weighs only 200 lbs. so that the centre of gravity is altered only slightly, certainly not enough to offset the smaller mainsail.

When we were hit by a gust, the heeling was gently and not a sudden laying over.

Our speed was moderately good but not nearly as fast as the standard Sunbird 25 yacht. The boat has not been designed as a racing yacht, but as a family cruising yacht that is safe, roomy and simple to sail. It has been fitted out as a complete motor sailer with no extras and at the price, it would be very hard to find a boat in this category to be its equal.

Even the big DRS headsail which doubles as drifter and spinnaker is included in the standard price. We raised this sail before calling it a day and found the boat handled it well and moved along at a smart pace.

For the family man, particularly if he were to be moving from power to sail, the Sunbird 25 Motor Sailer is a great boat — well built, comfortable, easy to sail and at a very very good price.

Sunbird has surprise below deck

Step below deck on the Sun Bird 25 and it becomes difficult to credit that you are on board a trailer sailer.

Plush upholstery, six berths, a dinette and a galley to attract any sea cook, male or female, are some of the comforts of home to be found on board this very roomy craft.

Trailer sailers — or trailable yachts — are growing larger and more sophisticated every year.

The Sun Bird is no exception to that rule. This 25-footer was introduced to the Australian Market last year as a natural follow-on from a popular stablemate, the Sun Maid 20.

Mind you, the Sun Bird is getting very close to the maximums that apply on trailable yachts. Under current N.S.W. towing regulations, it is too heavy for the average family alone.

It is not likely either to be the kind of boat families will keep in their driveway to launch for a day's sailing.

But it does have the advantage that unlike a small, fixed keel yacht, it can easily be moved from one mooring or racing ground to another.

CRUISING

My test sail of the Sun Bird 25 was perfect day on Pittwater from the marina of Newport Boat Sales. Bruce Moonie of NBS introduced the boat to me and a couple of friends and we set off for a couple of hours of very pleasant unfussed cruising.

In the light 5-10 knot breezes on Pittwater, the Sun Bird performed admirably under main and No. 2 genoa — both of which are standard equipment.

The steering was very light and easy, with the swinging blade balancing nicely in the full down position.

The sheeting for the mainsail was particularly comfortable and convenient and I liked the way the stay controls fed back to the cockpit — via adequate winches and well placed cleats — allowing

sophisticated tuning changes to huff tensions, if required.

The sails, by Houd, set well and the whole spirit of the rig meets the family requirements of not needing to cram too much sail on. Compared to boats of similar size, the Sun Bird carries a pretty small rig, but everything is well balanced and harmonious.

But it is below decks, that the Sun Bird has most appeal. The 6 ft. standing headroom.

The interior mouldings are well thought out and have a high standard of finish — and plenty of generous lockers and cubby holes. In the galley area one of these is even compartmented for cutlery.

DOUBLE BERTH

The forward cabin with a double berth can be screened off for privacy. A marine toilet is fitted in its own compartment to starboard, but can be located under the forward berth to allow dry hanging space if requested.

The dinette area to port converts to a double berth at night and there is room for two more on the very long settee berth to starboard.

The galley area astern of the dinette, is very well planned, with a moulded in ice box, sink, gimbaled stove and even a moulded recess for the very attractive cube design

timber chopping board, which would double as a chess or draughts board for those quieter moments.

The only thing out of place in the galley is the socket for the keel winch handle — the only clue to the Sun Bird's easy-to-lift swing centre-plate.

My sole criticism below was that the finger holes in a couple of locker swing and slide doors were too small for me to use easily.

The cockpit is roomy and comfortable with two large lockers — one of which goes down to the hull and therefore a potential leak or swamping problem. The other one was sealed off — and was quarter-full of water, lacking any self drainage.

These few faults aside, the Sun Bird will certainly appeal to the family who like their cruising comforts.

Sun Bird 25 Fact Sheet

LOA 25' Beam 8' 2" Draft 1' 8" to 4' Displacement 3400 lb. Ballast 1200 lb. Mainsail area 130 sq. ft. No. 1 genoa 195 sq. ft.

— Manly Daily

The Sunbird is a smooth flying yacht on wheels

Don't call it a trailer-sailer, it's a trailable yacht," the man said.

We didn't go too closely into the semantics, but it does seem people manufacturing and selling boats in the upper bracket of what has been known until now as the trailer-sailer market prefer to think of their boats as yachts, rather than as the glorified day sailers which pioneered the concept in this country.

There is a difference. Trailable yachts in Australia, which is a world leader in the field, offer just about everything their deep-keeled sisters do — with some important differences.

There are a number of boats coming on to the market now — from about 24 ft. up to 28 ft. — which are as comfortable and commodious as we have come to expect from this size range.

They mostly sail well — some of them are very fast indeed. The only reservation is that an owner would have to be very confident of his own ability, the nature of his boat and the expected weather conditions before he attempted anything more than a daylight outside passage.

Inside — or even in gulf or reef waters — they can be the ideal vehicle for a satisfying week-end or longer holiday period.

And they have the bonus of being able to be towed for thousands of kilometres to new and exciting waterways in a fraction of the time it would take to sail there.

This week, The Australian Afloat, looks at the 25 ft. Sunbird, a trailable yacht which has been available in this country only since the Melbourne Boat Show in 'na, but which 34 Australian families have already decided is the boat for them.

PERFORMANCE

A common misconception is that any boat which is trailable is simply a "dinghy with a dunny, whose only protection against the vagaries of sea and weather is a retractable centreboard.

This might have been true in the early days. Today, all manufacturers are conscious of stressing the built-in safety attributes of their boats.

In the case of the Sunbird, Mr Bruce Moonie, N.S.W. agent for the boat, who operates from Newport Boat Sales, points out that stability is achieved by spreading 1200 lb. of solid ballast along the full-length skeg keel.

Given a displacement of 3400 lb., this gives the Sunbird a ballast ratio of 35 per cent — comparable with many keel yachts of similar size.

The easily retractable 120 lb. centreboard's sole purpose is to improve ability to windward.

A high freeboard ensures that the boat can take a powerful knock or sustain a long reach in very heavy weather without causing anxiety to those aboard.

On the day of the test, Sydney's late-Summer north-easter was blowing down Pittwater at about 15 knots and it provided a fair sample of how the boat handled in medium going.

The Sunbird, under 130 sq. ft. main and 190 sq. ft. No. 2 genoa, pointed 'well', displayed 'good

reaching qualities and went sweetly on a run with the centreboard up.

There was no excessive weather helm and the tiller could, quite easily be handled by a woman or child — and, please, that is not meant to be chauvinistic.

But what really impressed us was the way the boat could be sailed single handed.

We had to put Ken Matts our photographer, ashore on a wharf on Scotland Island to obtain some of the shots we needed.

With Bruce Moonie doing it almost all by himself, the drop and pick-up were accomplished with ease — and that's not the easiest of sailing manoeuvres in a 25 ft. boat.

Mr Moonie claims the boat can be rigged from trailer on the ramp to sailing in 15 minutes. We believe him.

Also available in basic sail equipment is a 90 sq. ft. No. 3 genoa and a 55 sq. ft. storm jib.

ACCOMMODATION

The Sunbird was not designed for Randy Newman's Short People — there is a full 6 ft. standing room in most of the cabin.

But that's only the start. There are six full-sized berths, a dinette, full galley including a gimbaled spirit stove and 5 cubic foot refrigerator, enclosed forward cabin with large vee berth and an enclosed flushing toilet.

The cabin is fully moulded and lined and trim is in teak. Cushions are fabric in the cabin and vinyl in the cockpit.

None of this means additional cost, but are included in what the buyer takes away. We'll deal with cost later.

Ventilation is by a forward perspex hatch and a large sliding companionway hatch. Under way, the cabin is very well ventilated. At rest the full head lining provides protection from extremes in temperature.

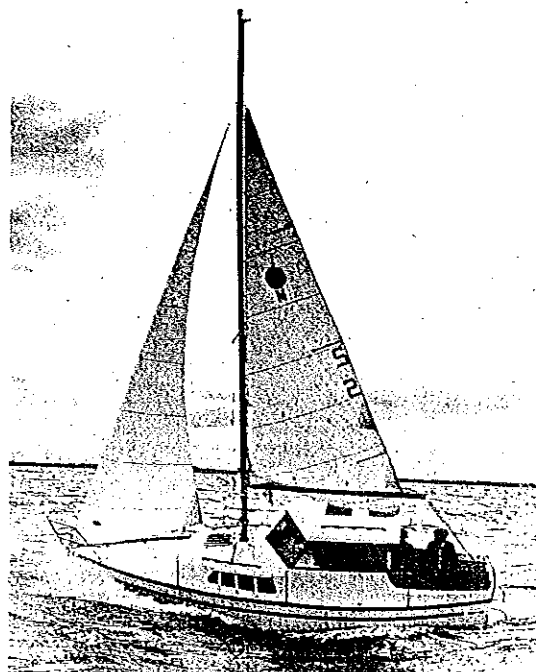
Given the spaciousness of the cabin, the cockpit is surprisingly long, roomy and — importantly — dry. Cockpit lockers are large and there are handy pockets on each side.

SAFETY

Most of the safety considerations surrounding this and other trailable yachts have already been dealt with. But it is worth stating that the standard Sunbird comes equipped with pulpit, pushpit, stanchions and lifelines.

The foredeck is roomy and slip-proofed to give a considerable feeling of safety up forward. The usual provisos regarding mandatory safety equipment and such things as riding navigation lights stand.

— The Australian.



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Hawkesbury River Ramble

We headed straight up the Hume Highway for the September school holidays, taking just 13 hours from Melbourne to Sydney, jogging along, allowing stops for meals. Following Ring Road 3 we reached our destination, Narrabeen Caravan Park (no particular virtues—merely a place to lay down the old head for the rest of the night). From here it was a few kilometres to Church Point at the southern end of Pittwater.

The most likely launching ramp appeared to be the public ramp at the eastern end of the public car park at Church Point, a stone's throw from the Post Office. The car park itself was large enough to leave our car and trailer along with the others—space is at a premium all along the waterfront here. While waiting 24 hours for the Sydney rain to cease, we took the opportunity to buy Admiralty Chart No. 204, Gregory's Sydney and Nearby Waterways map and Tide Tables at the newsagent near the Post Office. The tidal range here is approx. 1.6 metres, so it seemed preferable to launch at full tide. After a late afternoon sail up the beautiful Pittwater we anchored in Careel Bay just south of Palm Beach, taking care not to move in too closely to shore into the shallows. A trip ashore the following morning was necessary to replace the filter in the fuel line to our outboard motor. A short row in the dinghy, a ride accepted into Avalon to a motor accessories shop, a taxi ride back—and we were away!

A light north-easterly gave us a pleasant sail around the tip of Lambert Peninsula, enjoying the ocean swell at the mouth of Broken Bay. We had been advised not to hug the Peninsula too closely, but to head towards Lions Island before turning into the centre of the channel, particularly if conditions were rough as turbulence can then be experienced close inshore. After following the western shoreline into

following the western shoreline of the Peninsula we anchored for lunch in Refuge Bay. This attractive place is sheltered from three sides and boasts a waterfall and many available moorings. We had hoped to meet Jim and Anne Brown here, but the weather the previous day wasn't suitable for Jim to sail his new 32-foot East Coast 'Vivacious' up from Rucheutter's Bay. In a mixture of sunshine and spring showers we motored up Cowan Creek and chose the tributary Smith's Creek for our night's anchorage. On our public mooring and in the company of several cruisers, we spent our quietest night ever on the water.

The following day we enjoyed motoring to Bobbin Head which was full of smelly cruisers (the home of Halibuten) and very few yachts. So it was back to Coal and Candle Creek for lunch. Cottage Point at the entrance to the Creek had a store, fuel jetty, wine bar, bistro and Coastguard radio base. However our choice for stores and fuel was further along the Creek at Illawong, home of the Clipper cruisers. The Nautilus Restaurant here was one of the few we encountered on our whole waterways trip, but we did not sample it. Having satisfied on our curiosity in the Cowan Creek area, we spent that night by the waterfall at Refuge Bay, ready to move off up the Hawkesbury the following day.

Our start was delayed until lunch-time to ensure a favourable tide (at least about 6 knots on an ebb tide. In steady rain, which

lasted for the rest of the day we motored (more's the pity) to Brooklyn where we obtained the best service of our trip for food, fuel, ice and showers. On between Long and Dangar Islands we went, and around under the railway bridge, on past Long Island and Kangaroo Point (shop and fuel here) then under the road bridge. The rain was beginning to get us down at this stage, so after slipping through Milson's Channel we followed the coastline down to Sunny Corner (!) where we tied up to the pontoon outside Tom Bailey's Shipwreck Restaurant.

Rubbing our frozen hands with glee at the thought of the warmth and comfort of a good meal, a bottle of wine and hopefully some company, we dripped ashore to the shelter of Tom's verandah. But where was Tom? Alas, nowhere to be seen, for his restaurant opens Wednesday to Sunday for lunch and at week-ends, while we had stumbled there on a Monday. Tom would have been annoyed had he known that he lost twelve customers that evening, for a Clipper Cruiser had pulled in with two Donvale families aboard. Had the weather forecast that night been accurate (southerlies expected) our pontoon jetty would have been ideal. However, when a true northerly came in by about 7 p.m. we deserted our now uncomfortable berth and motored in the dark for a little shelter in Peat's Blight a short distance away. The wind blew, but waves could not build up very much in that limited area, so we slept quite well.

Into the narrower reaches of the Hawkesbury now we motored (still) on Day 4 which was last fine and sunny, with a breeze that was always on the nose no matter which way we turned. After four hours of winding river, granite outcrops, steep timbered slopes, mangroves and tiny settlements, we finally reached Wiseman's Ferry, which we carefully dodged. The town itself was a disappointment, for from the water the only featured were the ferries (three in all) caravan park and a kiosk. No fuel was available as recent floods had put water in the bowsters at the river. Not feeling inclined to motor further up river for fuel, we started on our return journey and sailed for some distance before the wind died and it was back to the motor. Darkness overtook us before the tiny town of Spencer and we spent a peaceful night by the riverbank.

In the morning of Day 5 we found Spencer to be a pleasant accommodating little town with all necessary food and fuel. A good sheltered anchorage in behind the small island there was noted. So too was the gathering of the town's elderly under a large waterfront gumtree bearing the sign "Dunkirk Hotel". One grey-haired lady was observed trying to row home in a boat which was still pointing astore and tied up to a convenient tree. The local store-keeper came to her rescue in his powerboat. At mid-time we drifted from the narrower section of river and found

ourselves heading for Tom Bailey's — on a Wednesday! So naturally we tied up and wined and dined 2—most enjoyable. It struck us how under-commercialised the area is, considering the fleets of cruisers and houseboats and the sprinkling of yachts passing by constantly. We understand, though, that businessmen come in by flying-boat to Tom Bailey's on occasions for lunch.

In no time we were back in Brooklyn and this time claimed a coin-in-the-slot hot shower — our first for a week, for which we would have been prepared to pay considerably more. A small laundry with automatic machines was also noted there. It was also one of the few places where a telephone was available, so we tried again to arrange a rendezvous with Anne and Jim — this time on Port Jackson in two days' time. More motoring and we were back in Refuge Bay.

(continued on page 13)

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WHY ACCEPT LESS?

CORAL BOAT CRUISING

13

Over the past couple of years, many Sunmaid people have taken their boats to North Queensland and enjoyed either a visit of a few weeks or in some cases a more extended stay.

Experience in this area with both the Sunmaid 20 and the Sunbird 25 has led to the compilation of these notes, the purpose of which is to give some background on a visit to Queensland and to dispel fears about the long trip up and back. One point of total agreement from the group who prepared these notes was that the area is magnificent, and that a visit to the Whitsunday area can provide the holiday of a life-time.

These notes should be read in conjunction with the reference books mentioned later. The best time of the year to visit the tropics is from July to October as the weather is most stable then, and this is the non-cyclone season. Winds are the South-East trade winds which are very constant and whose strength is usually between 10 knots and 25 knots. Short lived Northerlies punctuate the pattern every now and then. At this time of the year, the temperature is about 25 degrees C. and very pleasant days are followed by mild nights.

Preparation of Boat and Car Before Leaving

The trip to the Whitsundays is about 2700 km. so a thorough check of the car is recommended. For food (owing a Hayman-Reece hitch and level ride bars are recommended. Mud flaps are worthwhile to prevent stone damage to the car.

A pack rack on the car is necessary to carry the dinghy. Insure that your tyres (and spare) are in good condition. A check should be made with the R.A.C.V. to see if there are any problems with interstate requirements regarding towing (these seem to be rather vague at this stage), or with roads on the proposed route.

Check the boat trailer to ensure that it is in good condition; check all welds, bolts for tightness, timber runners for soundness, and wheel bearings before departing. Install a tie down from bow ring (a turnbuckle and chain is easily arranged and is quite satisfactory) and a tie down for the back of the boat. A good rear tie down is available from the Yacht Shop, Warrigall Road, Jakeligh. Make sure that either our car spare fits the trailer or you have a separate trailer spare wheel.

The boat should be checked and repaired for the trip. Most people use the boat as a van on the way up, so take this into account with your packing. A ground mat (to keep out the mud) and a suitable ladder (a folding transom ladder is ideal; an ordinary ladder which can be tied to the trailer for travelling is OK) makes access reasonable, and amping in the boat works well. For travelling, most rigging should either be removed or secured well to make sure no chaffing occurs with the constant movement.

Hawkesbury River Ramble

(Continued from page 12)

That is almost the end of the story, for we motored back to Pittwater and pulled the boat out at high tide on Day 6. On Day 7 we joined Anne and Jim, but the sail with them was not to be because of the wet wintry weather. After pending the afternoon socialising on board "Vivacious", we joined them at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia for a most delightful dinner, a fitting conclusion to a most pleasant holiday.

In general we found that a dinghy is a necessity for the few places where it was possible to go ashore (steep slopes to the waterline are inhibiting). A cosy campfire and the company that goes with it would have been welcome. However, the whole setting is delightful and to be recommended.

Betty Dack

The boat should travel as lightly as possible. Food can be bought at Mackay (prices same as Melbourne). Water tanks part full — (full tank is another 100 lbs. of water!). Not much clothing is needed for the Queensland winter, though warm gear is required during transit through Victoria and inland New South Wales.

There are some other things you will need to do before leaving home, such as choice of dinghy and choice of radio, but we will deal with these under later headings.

On The Road

The route recommended is the Newell Highway, Leichhardt Highway, and Burnett Highway to Rockhampton and the Bruce Highway up the coast. This route goes through Shepparton, Narrandera, Forbes, Dubbo, Moree, Goodindindi, Miles, Banana, Biloela, Mt. Morgan, Rockhampton and Mackay. In general the road conditions are good, although in Queensland there are some narrow sections, and also some single lane bridges. Road improvement works are constantly being done. In Queensland night driving should be avoided as the number of kangaroos and wandering stock has to be seen to be believed!

There are ample caravan parks on the route, or if you prefer roadside stops can be made, and showers are available at many garages. For example, they are available at Total Station, Wyalong; Shell Service Station, Coonabarabran and Shell, North Rockhampton. During the run through New South Wales the nights will be very cold. Typically, the Melbourne to Proserpine run takes 3 1/2 to 5 days depending on your travelling style.

If your car is thirsty or you wish to travel late you may need to carry fuel, but petrol is available at reasonable intervals.

During the trip, constantly check the boat trailer as most travelling problems seem to have been in this area. Each stop for petrol, etc. check tyres (temperature), wheel bearings (temperature), timber supports (for cracks) and trailer for any sign of bolts or wheel nuts coming loose. Also keep your eye on critical welds and on the nuts on support bolts, as well as the boat tie downs.

Anchorages could be considered under safety equipment and we recommend a minimum of two with a substantial amount of chain on each. Thirty feet on the main anchor and twenty feet on the second anchor would be OK. With sharp coral heads it is possible to lose an anchor up there, and care should be taken to avoid anchoring too near coral heads.

On the general question of safety gear, a Sunmaid should be set up in accordance with the VYC Safety Prescriptions, Category "C". There may be periods when you are on your own for some days and therefore all normal safety gear makes good sense.

Radio is recommended, and in a number of areas a watch is kept on 27,880 MHz at least for some of the time. Mackay and Airlie Beach both have voluntary rescue services which keep watch during weekends and most week days. 27,910 MHz can be used as a chatter channel. If you are going for an extended period or are a "loner", consider installing a marine radio with 2 MHz and 4 MHz bands. As well as having 24 hour contact with

Townsville (VIT) Rockhampton (VIR) and Brisbane (VIB) good marine forecasts are available at any time for the asking or are broadcast three times a day. You can send and receive telegrams also with this service, and it gives a real feeling of security.

The tide book put out by the Queensland Department of Harbours and Marine has a good section on radio communication.

A first class medical kit should be carried, and people should see their doctor for a suitable treatment for coral sores.

Coming from a Melbourne winter, sunburn may be a problem, so the usual precautions should be taken. A sun awning (boom tent) is also a useful addition.

Sandshoes are absolutely essential in this area, as the coral on beaches is rather sharp, and coral sores can follow scratches. A spare pair of sandshoes is even worthwhile.

Hamps

The following hamps have been tried by Sunmaid owners and can be recommended. Very low tides should be avoided at most ramps.

Mackay — Outer Harbour. Excellent ramps. Pile berths are available if you see the Harbour Master (Dick Willson).

Shute Harbour — Reasonable ramp at high tide, but parking is difficult.

Cannonvale — Shingley Beach. Good ramp. BEWARE of overhead power lines! This ramp would be difficult in a strong north-easterly. **Gloucester Passage — Monty's Place.** Good ramp sheltered in all conditions.

Bowen — Small Boat Harbour. Excellent ramp, all conditions. Pile berths also available in this location.

Townsville — Ross Creek. Excellent ramp, sheltered in all conditions.

Car parking for an extended period can be arranged at most places and two places which have been used are:

Marlin Marine (between Shute Harbour and Airlie Beach) — Telephone 079 46 6453.

Peter Rule (Mackay) — Telephone 079 55 1896 or 079 55 1056.

Undercover parking is also available at Shute Harbour — Shell Garage. Visitors to the area should note that Airlie Beach is the main centre of the Whitsunday area, with shops, banks, hotels, caravan parks, petrol supplies of boating equipment can be obtained at Marlin Marine.

Navigation and Safety Gear

Navigation around the area is quite simple, and basic coastal navigation techniques are adequate. If you have done very little (or none) of this, Toghills' book "Navigation for Beginners" can be recommended. The following charts are suggested: Admiralty Chart 252 (Whitsunday area only) or Aust Charts 823, 824, 825, 826 and 827 (cover the whole area from Mackay to Townsville).

Chart 6011 which shows standard symbols and abbreviations is also recommended, and a handy idea is to make photo copies of small sections of the chart which can then be kept in the cockpit.

The tides in the area need to be considered, as they can make a big difference to passages. Mackay has

the greatest tidal variation, with spring tides of 6.1 metres (20 feet). Tidal heights tend to get less as one goes north, with Airlie Beach experiencing about 50% of the Mackay tides. In general tidal streams ebb to the north, and the strongest streams in the area are around the Whitsunday Passage itself. A set of tide tables is essential, both for considering these streams and for anchoring. (See details later under books).

Dinghy, Battery and Water Containers

Everyone who has cruised the area agrees that a dinghy is essential. Many islands do not have a jetty, and even when they are there it is not always possible to use them. You can expect to be anchored most nights.

For the weather conditions, loading, stability and towing, it is considered that a 7 foot dinghy is the minimum. Stability and load capacity are problems below this size. If a plywood dinghy is taken it must have good runners underneath as it will ground on the coral quite often. The 8 foot plastic Tamco dinghy is ideal and being soft is kind on the "mother craft".

Whilst most people are satisfied to row their dinghies, a 2 h.p. outboard is very useful for the dinghy, particularly if you intend going fishing regularly. A mounting board on the pushpit for the dinghy outboard is a good idea. All the usual precautions apply and double towing lines are advised (dinghies may be lost due to a broken line) and floating lines should be avoided as they end up in the propeller very quickly.

The battery in the Sunmaid has a limited capacity, and people going north generally are on their boats for a longer period than normal.

The Sunmaid battery (50 ampere hours) seems to last about two weeks with careful use of cabin lights. If you do not charge your battery from the motor, it may be worth considering a larger capacity battery, but in any case batteries can be recharged at Mackay, Shute Harbour, Airlie Beach, Bowen and Townsville.

Water is obtainable at Mackay, Dent Island, Shute Harbour, Airlie Beach, Bowen and Townsville, and if required can be obtained at most resorts by asking for it. We recommend taking two 2 gallon containers to minimise the problem of carting the water to the boat.

Food Supplies, Refrigeration, etc. Food supplies at Melbourne prices are obtainable at Mackay, Bowen and Townsville. Food at Airlie Beach and Proserpine is more expensive (but reasonable choice) whilst food may be purchased at many of the resorts, but is more costly again.

There are three choices with keeping fresh food, milk and drinks. These are:

- Fit a refrigeration unit.
- Use the existing ice box.
- Decide to do without ice at all.

Each method has its devotees, and one had to make up one's own mind. (a) is good, but you need to carry a power plant such as a 300 watt Honda to charge your battery daily. (b) fresh food on ice can be kept for up to 3 days; after that you must visit a town or resort, or follow (c). (c) means you do without cold drinks and fresh meat, but you can go off for a week or more without problems. Dry milk (instant), fresh or canned vegetables and dried and canned foods work very well.

Take some gear for cooking the fish you catch, and another good idea is to bake bread occasionally. A pressure cooker on the metho stove works very well saving much time and a lot of metho in boiling chickens for example. Drinks can be cooled by hanging over the side in a string bag.

Bulk metho can't be bought at other than the main towns, so take plenty. Bottles available at Airlie Beach.

Washing up can be done in salt water (save that precious fresh water) and BP Comprox is a good detergent.

There are laundrettes at Mackay, South Molle Island, Bowen, Townsville and at Airlie Beach.

Resorts

Resorts around the coast welcome visitors, and we suggest that immediately on arrival at any island you make contact with the resort office, introduce yourself and determine the local rules. Lunches and dinners are available at most resorts (they like perhaps an hours warning), their bars are open to visitors and some islands like you to register. Various supplies are often available an ice is available at some resorts.

Places To Go

The list below covers areas visited by Sunmaid people over the last few years. It is by no means exhaustive but gives a good start to the area. The places are listed going north, and as the Trade Winds blow in this direction a trip from South to North is always recommended. Comments on anchorages refer to SE winds. Northerlies may alter the situation.

• Mackay Outer Harbour — good anchorage, 2 miles from town. St. Bees and Keswick Island — fair anchorage, some swell. Seawall Island — very good anchorage, beautiful island.

• Brampton Island — Carlisle Island — good anchorage, great resort. Goldsmith Island — good anchorage, beautiful island. Thomas Island — good anchorage, beautiful island. Shaw Island — good anchorage.

• Lindeman Island — (day anchorage only, stay at Shaw Island).

• Dent Island (Coral Arts) — (day anchorages only, 7 fathoms off reef).

• Long Island — Happy Bay — excellent anchorage, very friendly resort.

• Long Island-Palm Bay — anchorage OK.

(Continued on page 14)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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VICTORIA

National titles at Paynesville went well

Gippsland Lakes Yacht Club did a great job in running the Series. We gratefully thank the Commodore John Nash, Committee-man Bob Brown, and their many helpers. We had full use of the Club House. Their auxiliaries laid on lunches, tea and coffee, and even barbecues which were very much appreciated. The G.L.Y.C. Junior Committee organised a fine disco for themselves and the visiting juniors. Our New Year's Eve barbecue at the Hall's property on Raymond Island was nearly washed out by the only heavy rain we had in two weeks. However it cleared by about 10 p.m. allowing us late starters to join the

"drowned" early starters. We had a lovely picnic day on New Year's Day with a fun sail to Sperrin Head National Park (Lady skippers over, junior skippers back, some interchange with the Paper Tiger people).

The races themselves were varied. The first four were in sparkling breezes of around 15 knots, the next in gusty 35 knots was very tough, and the last was very light. Something for everyone.

With the races completed, the presentation Dinner-dance at the Paynesville Motor Hotel was attended by most of our compliment of 200 plus people. Everyone was relaxed and ready to enjoy a good meal, a shortish presentation, and a good dance. Kids and all. Thanks to Chris Bradford and Sandra Connolly, we had an impressive display of trophies for the Championships, the Heat Winners, Divisions A, B and C of the Sun Maids and for the Lady Skipper and Junior Skipper races and of course the Sun Birds. Thanks go to Botewells (who mould our boats) and to Sun Maid Yachts — Chris and Enid, who presented the magnificent Sun Maid and Sun Bird Perpetual Trophies respectively.

For the first time, our Division systems really worked. There was great and continuing competition for the C division (inexperienced and restricted sails) placings, and also for the B Division (full rig, middle level performances) placings. Most heartening. You C Division boats in particular should keep this going.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, it's all over! The Australian Championships I mean. The Series went off like everyone concerned had hoped. There were 38 Sun Maid entries and 9 Sun Birds. The only real disappointment was the sparse entry from out-of-State. Two South Australians came and that was it. There were incidents ashore — several visits to Balmersdale Hospital for minor ailments, two more serious. Kevin Bately of the South Australian entrant Solaris, fell on the ferry ramp and suffered concussion serious enough that he was flown from Balmersdale to Melbourne for observation and tests.

Fortunately Kevin was OK in a few days and returned to Paynesville in time to finish 6th in the 4th heat (the rough one) and to win the final heat. His crew, Phil and Les had kept Solaris going in fine style while he was away. However they are entitled to wonder how they would have been placed if Kevin, the skipper had been able to sail the complete series. Mrs Snowball also was admitted to Balmersdale Hospital for a few days with an infection leaving Greg and 'Trapper' short of their good crew. Also before the series even began Chris (Mrs) Praket fell in the cockpit of 'Christel' and injured a leg and ribs

requiring their early return to Melbourne.

I hope all are fully recovered. There were some minor incidents

afloat and some resulting protests. This is only to be expected in any title series racing with competition for starts and at buoys. Skippers need to know the rules of racing, the penalties for breaches and the means for absolving themselves. Protesting of breaches is good — it keeps skippers honest and enhances racing. There seemed to be no residual bitterness among those involved, which is as it should be.

SUNMAID TRAVELS THE STATES

(Continued from page 13)

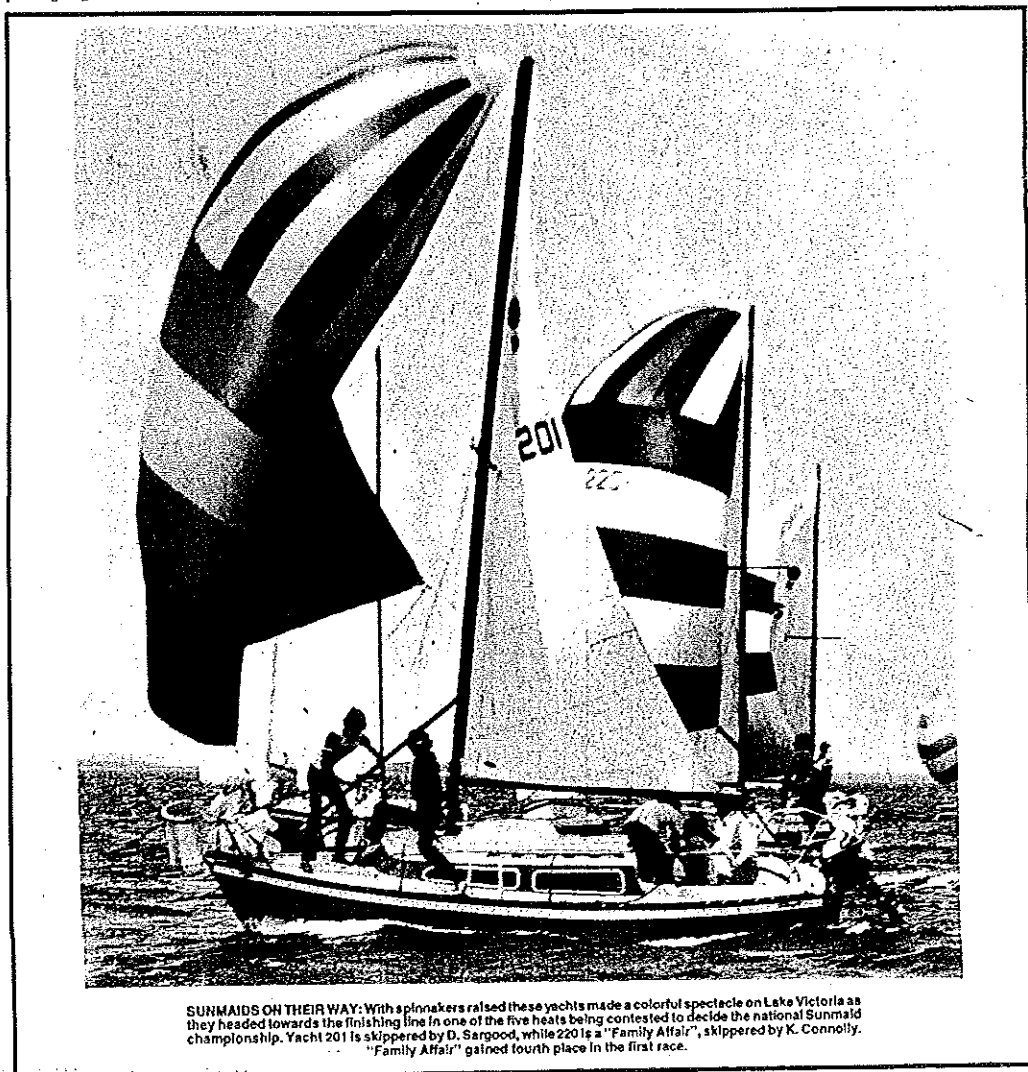
- Whitsunday Island-Old Harbour — excellent anchorage, very pretty. Whitsunday Island-White Haven Bay — excellent anchorage, whitest sand. Whitsunday Island-Gulnare Inlet — excellent anchorage. Whitsunday Island-Hill Inlet — excellent shelter, magnificent oysters.
- Hazelwood Island — fair anchorage, swell.
- South Molle Island — fair anchorage, significant swell.
- Shute Harbour — good anchorage, have to pay for water.
- Hook Island-Observatory — poor anchorage (day visit only).
- Hook Island-Nara Inlet — good anchorage, can be some swell.
- Hook Island-Butterfly Bay — excellent anchorage.
- Alfrie Beach — good anchorage, all facilities here.
- Cannonvale — good anchorage.
- Hayman Island — day anchorage only.
- Double Bay — good anchorage.
- Grassy Island — fair anchorage, some swell, best oysters in area.
- Gloucester Island — good anchorage.
- Gloucester Passage-Monty's Place — good anchorage.
- Bowen Small Boat Harbour — good anchorage.
- Cape Upstart — good anchorage.
- Cape Cleveland — good anchorage.
- Magnetic Island-Horseshoe Bay — good anchorage, very pretty area.
- Townsville Harbour-Ross Creek — good anchorage.
- Resorts at these places. Mainland harbours.

Winds

Winds are predictable at the time of the year suggested. Forecasts are for conditions on the open sea, and yachtsmen should be aware of local effects. For example, with these islands 20 knot winds will produce 40 knot bullets behind hills and over saddles. This is no different from other places, but it is more noticeable at an island because of the isolation. Common sense is all that is required. Know how to reef sails. If in doubt, better less sail on than more!

Reference Books (recommended)

1. Official Tide Tables and Notes on Boating — \$1.00 (1977 price) from Department of Harbours and Marine, P.O. Box 2195, G.P.O. Brisbane, 4001.
2. Cruising The Coral Coast: Alan Lucas — \$9.00 from most book-sellers.
3. The Cruising Yachtsman's Guide to the Whitsundays — \$1.00 GYC — Mackay from The Yacht Club at Mackay, P.O. Box 952, Mackay 4740.



SUNMAIDS ON THEIR WAY: With spinnakers raised these yachts made a colorful spectacle on Lake Victoria as they headed towards the finishing line in one of the five heats being contested to decide the national Sunmaid championship. Yacht 201 is skippered by D. Sargood, while 220 is a "Family Affair", skippered by K. Connolly. "Family Affair" gained fourth place in the first race.

How to care for your sails

Sails are like people and therefore to achieve maximum life they must be looked after and cared for.

BREAKING IN

The first time you use your sails should be in the weather conditions for which they were designed. Do not go out and put up your new mainsail in a howling gale the very first time. You must learn how to sheet it and trim it and a good breeze of somewhere between 10 or 18 knots is the best time to do this.

The same applies to your headsails and the important thing here is to ensure that you get to know the correct luff tensions and sheeting positions for all the various breezes. The important rule with your new sails is to get to know them on the boat before you go out racing. It is important to note sheeting positions on all the sails, otherwise you each time you put them on that you have to spend quite some time getting everything right on the boat and this obviously costs time on the race track.

CARE OF YOUR SAILS DURING THE SEASON

The most important thing to remember after using your sails is that they should not be stuffed away in the sail bags wet. Synthetic sailcloths do not rot, however they do mildew and although the cloths are treated for this they will still mildew if put away in a damp condition. Therefore the most important thing to do after sailing is to dry the sails. Sometimes this is difficult to do, however a good system for this on a racing boat is for each crew member to take one sail home and dry it. They do not need washing each time although if possible, it is an advantage to hose the sail water out of the cloth if they have become very wet. The sail does not cause any damage, however if the sail gets encrusted with a lot of salt it does make the sailcloth more difficult to dry and it tends to get hard and difficult to dry and it tends to get hard and difficult to pack. After the sails are dried they should be folded carefully and rolled up, then put in to their bags. The easiest way to do this is to lay the foot of the sail out along the deck and then flake the rest of the sail down on to the foot, and then roll the sail up loosely.

Some boats with grooved headstay systems have what we call turtle bags and if your boat has these it becomes automatic that the sails are always flaked and put into bags. The mainsail should always be folded. Usually the easiest way is over the main boom and then rolled and put in the bag. If you leave your mainsail on the main boom the overhaul should be eased and all the battens should be removed. You should have a mainsail cover to cover it. If you leave it exposed to the sunlight the ultra-violet rays of the sun will weaken the fibres and the sailcloth will eventually become quite weak and tear easily.

END OF SEASON MAINTENANCE

At the end of each season you should take your sails ashore and try to find a nice clean path or something similar and lay each sail out, hose it down, dry it carefully

and fold it up. It is a good idea at this time to bring the sails back to us to have them completely checked over and we will store them for you. We offer a complete overhaul and reconditioning service during the winter months.

As far as washing is concerned, at the end of the season you can either wash the sails in a bath or on a concrete path or out on a lawn. When sails are used they may get various types of stains on them and here is a guide for the removal of the more common ones.

Blood

Soak the stained portion in cold water containing half a cup of ammonia to half a gallon of water. If residual stains are still present after this treatment, damp the stains with 1% solution of ammonia to half a gallon of water. If residual stains are still present after this treatment, damp the stains with 1% solution of ammonia in water, allow to stand without drying for 30 minutes and then rinse out thoroughly.

Mildew

Scrub lightly with a dry stiff brush to remove as much of the mould growth as possible and then steep the stained portion for two hours in cold solution of bleach (sodium hypochlorite) at a strength of approximately 1%. A proprietary brand of liquid bleach may be used according to manufacturers instructions. Wash thoroughly in water and repeat the treatment if necessary. If after the final washing there is a residual smell of chlorine, this may be removed by immersing for a few minutes in a 1% solution of sodium thiosulphate (photographers hypo). Rinse thoroughly with water.

Oil, Grease and Waxes

Small stains of this nature can be removed by dabbing with trichlorethylene or by the use of proprietary stain removers. Heavy staining is best removed by brushing on a mixture of detergent and solvent. This can be prepared by dissolving one part of Lissapol NX (or any other strong detergent) in two parts of benzene or white spirits. These "Solvent/Detergent" mixtures should be brushed well into the fabric, left for about 15 minutes and then washed off with warm water. A well ventilated place should be selected for carrying out this treatment, and precautions should be exercised if the solvents are inflammable. These treatments will remove oils, greases, petroleum jelly and most lubricating mixtures. But they will not remove stains caused by the fine metallic particles often associated with lubricants. Such stains can be removed by methods described opposite after the oil or grease has been eliminated.

Metallic Stains

Stains caused by metals in the form of rust, verdigris or finely divided particles, can be removed by either of the following methods.

(a) Immerse the stained portion in a 5% solution of oxalic acid dissolved in hot water (1 oz. of oxalic acid dissolved in each pint of hot water). The hands and the fabric should be washed very thoroughly after using oxalic solutions, as this chemical is poisonous.

(b) Immerse the stained portion in a warm solution containing two of concentrated hydrochloric acid plus 100 parts of water. Wash off thoroughly with water.

Pitch and Tar

Organic solvents such as perchlorethylene, trichlorethylene, trichlorethane or white spirits may be dabbed on to the stain to effect removal. Again care should be observed when using inflammable solvents.

Varnish

Dab the stain first with trichlorethylene and then with a mixture of equal parts of acetone and amylacetate. Shellac Varnish is easily removed with alcohol or methylated spirits. Paint strippers based on alkalis should not be used on these fabrics. Wash thoroughly in water afterwards.

This covers the main points in washing sails. It is important to look after your sails at all times and if you do this they will give you many years of good service.

— By courtesy Hood

THEY ALL LOVE THE SUNMAID

She has to be the sailing success of this recession-ridden stagflation age.

She's the Sun Maid 20 — and it all started about 18 months ago when a blackbearded sailor called Chris Hall decided it would be nice to own a little boat of his own.

He went along to give the once-over to a hull shape he fancied, and ended up buying not only the yacht but the agency as well.

"The bloke told me he'd make just \$18 in two years", says Hall.

Chris, 34, a blue-water man with two Sydney-Hobarts and about 15,000 sea-miles behind him, has certainly improved on that. Call him the trailer-sailer tycoon.

He started building in the front yard of his Mt. Eliza home, just himself and his wife.

Now he has an eye-catching workshop-come-showroom on the Nepean Highway at Carrum, handy for launching in the Patterson River.

In the 18 months since he mastered the art of laying-up g.r.p. he has sold 138 of his smart-looking, seaworthy little yachts.

He and his staff of five are turning out three a week. They have 34 in the order book and their stand at Sailboat '76 recently was the star of the show.

The main thing was, you couldn't miss it. There is was, hard by the bar, featuring super-salesman Hall's show-stopper, a sexy, black-with-gold-trim ensemble of

Sunmaid, trailer and Mercedes, a snap at \$33,000 the lot.

Hall says the secret of his success is 138 satisfied customers.

"If anyone has a complaint, I go along and fix it myself", he says and adds with fierce pride: "There aren't very many. Let's face it nobody builds a better boat".

Crowning point to date of the Hall success story was down at Geelong last week-end.

"We had the second annual get-together of the Sun Maid class association", he says.

"We had nine boats the first year. There were 25 this time, all as guests of the Royal Geelong Club.

"We had a good time, John Bennett, of Geelong, won the two-race series, and that was excellent. He's been with us since the beginning".

Chris Hall's demo boat, his own favorite Sun Maid, Solamis II has the lot — fully equipped for cruising, racing, you name it, from a tri-radial cut spinnaker down to the latest in electronics.

And, on the Queen's Birthday Monday, he pulled his latest trick out of the bag — a blooper.

This, for the uninitiated, is the full-cut extra that the really gun racers sport off the wind. Most unusual, believe me, in a trailer-sailer.

"We were clocking eight knots in a 15-knot breeze, no kidding," say a gleeful Hall.

Now this I've just got to see. Stand by for the boat test.



Sunmaid 7, Southern Cross 23 in sail.

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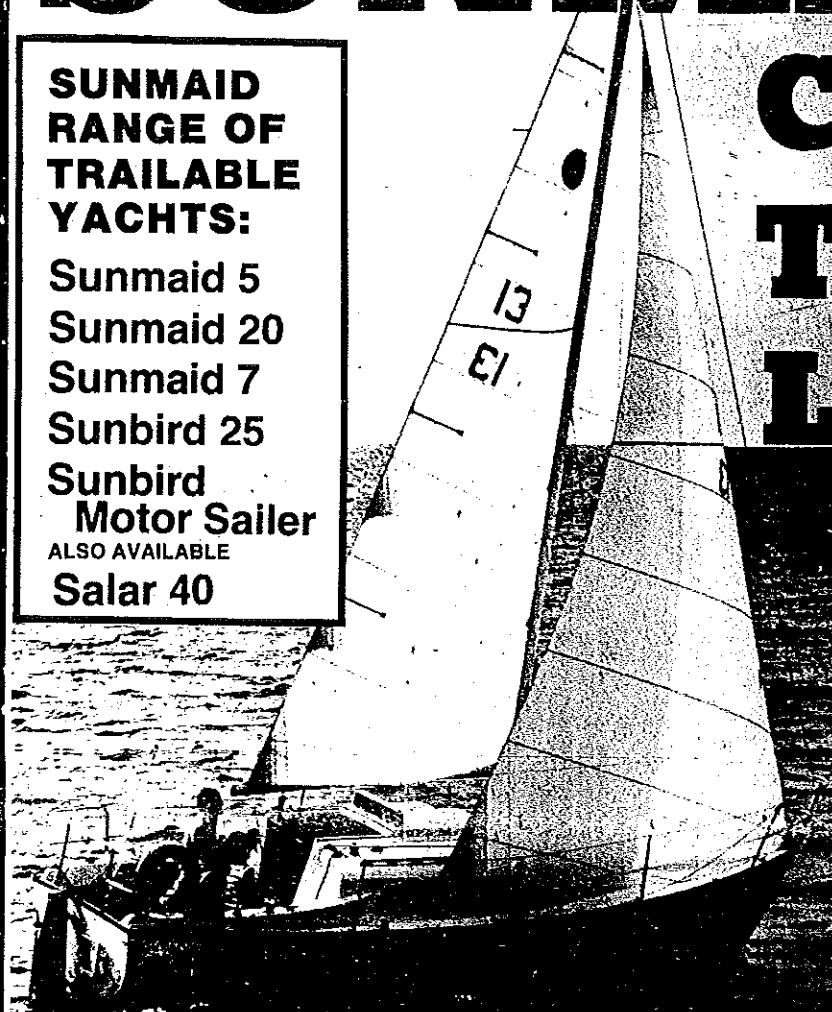
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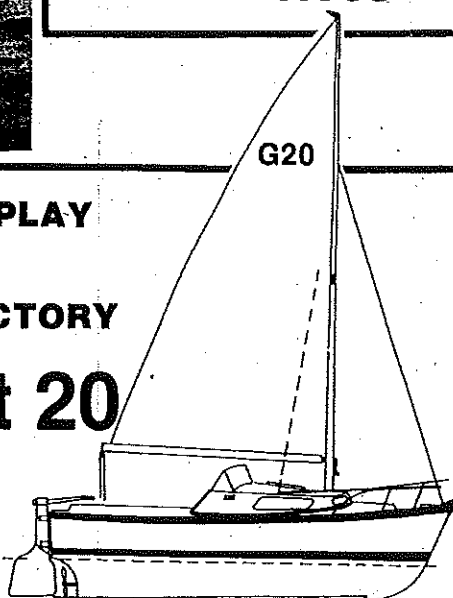
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